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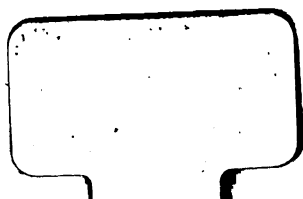
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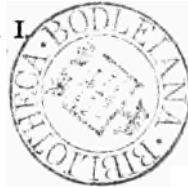
A
FRIEND AT COURT.

A Nobel.

BY
ALEX. CHARLES EWALD, F.S.A.
AUTHOR OF
"THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ALGERNON SYDNEY," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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A FRIEND AT COURT.

CHAPTER I.

THE BATTLE OF THE BLUES.

AT last the day, the great, the important day, had arrived, not indeed big with the fate of Cato and of Rome, but with that of the two Universities, for the possession of the blue ribbon of the river. It was the hour of the aquatic Derby. The banks of the Thames were lined with spectators; the bosom of the river was crowded with craft; gay flags and buntings hung from bridges, steeples, and river-side buildings; and everywhere excitement, eager expectation, and confusion were rampant.

For weeks the condition of the rival crews and their respective chances of success had been topics of conversation

among all. The newspapers indulged in erudite articles respecting the art of rowing, used most severe terms when discussing the style of the two boats, were lavish of advice to the competing oarsmen, and expressed opposite opinions as to which University would be the victor. Society, too, was equally divided upon this last point. Some thought the Oxford men too heavy, and out of condition for so long a race as from Putney to Mortlake. Others again said that Cambridge was too light and deficient in staying power to send her boat ahead of her rival. And then technical words were freely used, and the faults and good points of both eights discussed or contradicted according to the prejudiced views of the speakers. Partisans of the light blue said that the Oxford men didn't "spring at their work" with sufficient eagerness, whilst those who wore the dark blue retorted that the Cambridge men "hung on their feather," that their stroke was "awfully ragged," and that their cox. knew as much about steering as a bull did of skating, and so on. But in spite of all remarks, either disparaging or

laudatory, it was universally admitted that the race would be both a close and a good one. Oxford, however, owing to her previous successes, was slightly the favourite with the public. The watermen prudently held aloof from expressing decided opinions either way, and contented themselves with the profound prophecy that if "Oxford College didn't win, why it was a dead certainty that the Cantabs would."

The day chosen for the race was all that could be wished. A dark blue sky (as if the heavens were in favour of Oxford), a south-westerly wind, and a bright April sunshine heralded in the eventful morning. From the incessant tide of pedestrians, equestrians, and what the lower classes call "carriage company" which crowded every road and pathway leading to Mortlake, it seemed as if everybody was anxious to take advantage of the propitious weather for an outing. Epsom on Derby day, Ascot on Cup day, and Lord's on the day of the Eton and Harrow, could alone rival the motley sight. Almost from daybreak there had been one continual flow of visitors—patri-

cian and proletarian—hastening from London and the suburbs to the scene of action. Mortlake, of course, was the chief centre of attraction ; but long before the hour fixed for the race every available spot—whether bridge, wharf, villa garden, or temporary stand—commanding anything like a view was thronged with excited spectators. The time for the start had been fixed for eleven, and it was now somewhat after half-past ten. Carriages, accordingly, were pushing on as fast as they could to their different points of destination, and many, finding progress impossible, pulled up at the first open space by the river-side, there to take their stand and to see what could be seen.

Watching the scene before him—the throng of carts and carriages, the itinerant cadgers, the pretty girls wearing the colours of their favourite university, the restive horses with their nervous riders, the nigger minstrels, &c.—was a tall young man. He was standing in the front garden of the little inn which the Oxford crew then always patronized on such occasions. From his dark blue flannel jacket, white flannel

trousers, and straw hat surrounded with dark blue ribbon, it was evident that he was one of the heroes of the hour. Indeed, he was one of the most prominent of the *Salaminomachæ*, being no less than the stroke of the Oxford boat. And if ever man looked like form and fettle, and worthy to possess the confidence of his university, Kit Mowbray was he.

As he stands with one hand thrust deeply in his jacket pocket, and with the other waving a greeting to Alick Stephen, of Merton, who is trying to drive his sister down to Mortlake, let me take the opportunity of describing him. Not exactly good looking, but undoubtedly a fine man. Tall, broad chested, strong limbed, and yet with a refinement and grace about his figure not always to be recognised in the athlete. The features are not perfect, but the face is one so eminently healthy and honest in its expression, that you can never think it otherwise than handsome. The head, long, and well shaped, is crowned by thick light hair, which falls around a broad open brow in clustering curls. The nose is

one of those indescribable features which belong to no particular class—a nose which looked as if nature had at first intended to give it a most respectable bridge all the way down, and then suddenly changed her mind, and “tip-tilted” it about the region of the nostrils. The mouth and chin are lost to view by the evidently well tended silky beard, which, in the sunshine, is very soft and golden. But, strictly speaking, Kit Mowbray’s only claim to beauty is in those wonderful eyes of his. Some families, you know, have a particular feature which is handed down from generation to generation, and which appears as the distinctive mark of their race. With some it is a big head, or a heavy under lip; with others a beaky nose, or small hands: with the Mowbrays it was their eyes. From the days when the first Mowbray planted his foot in that charming western county Bighshire, and took unto himself the lands of other people, in the reign of the Red King, to constitute his noble domain at Yllton-Tyrell, large, clearly cut eyes, with their long, sweeping lashes, have been the

distinctive sign of Mowbray descent. "As beautiful as a Mowbray's eyes" is a common local proverb round about Yllton. And certainly in this respect Kit does not belie his name and origin, though there are those who say that he is no descendant of the real Mowbrays; but into this question I shall not enter. His eyes are large, and blue as an Italian lake in the sunshine; but, unlike most blue eyes, are strongly shaded with black lashes. Their expression is frank and genial, and as they steadily meet your gaze, you feel that their owner is incapable of meanness or deceit. And you are right: eyes such as those are the windows of a soul which scorns dishonour:

There is a conscious air of health and strength plainly visible in every movement of the man. As he walks toward the corner of the garden abutting on the road, to get a better view of the eager crowd, a kind of proud swagger reveals itself in his gait, as much as to say, "You people have often heard about Young Oxford; well, just look at me, and see if you have often come across a finer specimen of the genus before."

And as he with folded arms gazes almost haughtily at the passing crowd, more than one woman looks with admiration at his splendid type of manhood, and more than one man envies his well-knit figure and superb condition. "Ah, youth, youth!" muttered Lord Salamis, the well-known statesman, as he leant back in his landau and surveyed Kit through his eye-glass, "what can be compared to thee? Who would not give up fame, wealth, and the intoxication of the world's applause in exchange for thee? Ah, the sunshine of life is youth—all the rest is but the after-glow!"

The throng of vehicles was now so dense that the carriage in which Lord Salamis was seated came to a dead stand-still right in front of young Mowbray. Kit looked up, and his eyes met those of the great man fixed admiringly, almost enviously, upon him.

"Oh, Lord Salamis, I do hope *so* that Oxford will win. Papa and Arthur *will* be so glad!" said a young lady seated by his side.

"Well, Muriel, if you hope it I trust your hopes will be realized." And then he muttered *sotto voce*, "I am inclined to think Oxford *will* win, if they are all like yon young man."

"Oh, but why cannot Jennings drive on? I am so afraid we shall lose the race! What a crowd of carriages there is!—it is quite impossible for us to get along! Dear, dear, what a nuisance! Oh, do tell Jennings to drive on!" And the speaker in her excitement stood up, the better to see whether progress was so utterly out of the question.

Kit leant against the rails which protected the little garden from the road, and took a long look at the fair girl who had just addressed Lord Salamis. She was beautiful enough to have attracted the attention of men far older than my hero. Indeed, Kit thought he had never seen such beauty. She was seated, or rather at the present moment was standing next to Lord Salamis—her clear, pale face flushed with impetuosity, and her large brown eyes sparkling with excitement.

There could be no doubt that she was in favour of Oxford, for from bonnet to kirtle she was dressed in the darkest of blues. And certainly that dark blue bonnet framed as fair a type of English beauty as Albion ever called her own. Imagine rich auburn tresses, a broad brow, well shaded by the hair, large hazel eyes fringed by thick lashes, a straight nose, the mouth—that rarest beauty in woman—perfect in its bow-like shape, the face an exquisite oval—and the portrait of Muriel Barillon stands before you. Nor did her charms end only with her expressive face. Her tall, figure, with its sloping shoulders and serpentine grace of movement, was invested with an air of dignity and self-respect which I have seen few women equal, and none surpass. Certainly Virgil must have had such a form mirrored in his mind when he wrote “*et vera incessu patuit Dea.*”

Whilst bending forward to get a better view of the dead-lock before her, Miss Barillon dropped her sunshade almost at Kit's feet. The young man picked

it up, and handed it to her with his best bow.

"Thanks, very much!" said she, smiling and reseating herself; but with that smile there came a look from her soft eyes full of pleased astonishment as much as to say, "Are you going to row? I am so glad Oxford boasts such a champion!"

"I think," ventured Kit, addressing Lord Salamis and his fair companion, "that if you were to drive down yonder lane, and take your stand by those willows near the banks of the river, you would have a far better view of the race than you could get now anywhere else."

"Oh, do you think so? Thanks!" replied Miss Barillon. And then turning to her escort she said somewhat eagerly, "Lord Salamis, do let us drive there—will you?"

The statesman put up his glass, and after a brief survey of the scene in front of him said smilingly to Kit, "I think we have no alternative but to accept your advice—it is impossible that we can ever reach Mortlake in the present state of the road."

"Oh, perfectly impossible!" re-echoed Kit; "but by those willows you will see the start and command a good view of the race for some few minutes."

"And you are going to row, are you not?" asked Miss Barillon, curiosity conquering conventionality.

"I have that honour," answered Kit, gaily; "and I am glad to see you are on the side of Oxford. Shall I tell your coachman to take the turning to the left, and drive down the lane?" continued he, addressing the statesman.

"If you would be so good," replied Lord Salamis. And with a bow from Miss Barillon, and a "Floreat Oxonia!" said cheerily by the peer, the carriage drove off.

"That's an awfully nice girl! Just the kind of woman a fellow would fall in love with at first sight. Gad, I feel quite spooney already!" reflected Mowbray; but as that young man is accustomed to lose what he is pleased to term his heart about eight times a day, I cannot much believe either in the depth of his devotion or in the

severity of Cupid's wounds. Having made this reflection to himself, and having gazed at Miss Barillon's very well plaited chignon till the carriage was out of sight, he turned back to the noisy inn and joined the rest of the crew, who, hanging about the doorway, were the observed of all observers.

After a few minutes' chatting together and enjoying the good-humoured chaff of the admiring crowd, the captain gave the order to march, and the crew walked leisurely down to their boat. And now the welkin (if Putney boasts such a thing in the place) resounded with the cries of "I'll lay six to four on Oxford College." "The dark blues, them's the boys for my money." "Ain't they a fine set, 'Arry?" "Shove her along, gents!—shove her along!" "Dark blue for ever-r-r." "Cambridge for ever-r-r!" "Foreignering coves can't show anything like that!" "Who's the stroke?—that little man with the bandy legs?" "No, that tall fellow with his hands in his pockets—a good-looking chap he is, too!" "Oh, there are the dear Oxford crew—how nice they look! I do *so* hope

they'll win!" "No, no, Cambridge for ever!" "Oxford for ever!" &c.

And now for the next few minutes suspense was at its most anxious moment and excitement at fever heat. At last the surging crowd saw the rival crews paddle to the starting buoys, saw them strip off their jackets and settle down to their seats, heard the cox.'s cry of "Forward all!" and the starter's "Are you ready?" and then—away like an arrow sped the boats!

Forth from banks and barge yell the cries of "They're off!" "Cambridge is leading!" "No, they're level!" "Well rowed, Oxford!" "Rowed indeed! Go it, Cambridge!" "Steady there, No. 4!" "What are you a-doing of, bow? keep your elbows to your side, and finish with your shoulders," &c. &c., all down the line.

Standing on the bows of the umpire's boat were two elderly gentlemen who appeared to take a great interest in the race, and especially in the prowess of Kit Mowbray, who was now doing his thirty-eight strokes a minute in splendid form, amid ringing

cheers from the banks and excited shrieks from his university.

“It must be a fearful tax upon the poor boy’s strength!” said the younger of the two elderly gentlemen, with an expression of almost painful anxiety on his face. He was evidently from his garb a clergyman, and if you or I, gentle reader, were ever in mental trouble, I think that that tall, thin figure, with its kindly face and eyes full of tenderness, would soon appeal to our hearts and extract our confidence. In the look of those deep blue eyes, and in the cast of the features, Canon Mowbray—for such he is—somewhat resembles his son, but with this mighty difference, that in the face of the one you read of a man who has been taught to look gravely upon life by sympathizing contact with suffering, whilst in the face of the other you see nothing but that happiness and geniality which arise from perfect satisfaction with oneself and the world around.

“Pooh! pooh!” replied his companion; “the very best thing in the world! Nothing like all this training and exercise to turn a

young fellow into a thorough man. I hate milksops—there are too many about nowadays! It's this admiration for pluck and strength that makes Englishmen what they are—the first in the field everywhere! Hallo, Hubert, it is a dead heat now with a vengeance! Well rowed, Kit! well rowed indeed, sir!"

Few would have imagined that the two speakers were brothers. The clergyman, with his modest grace of demeanour and absence of all affectation, seemed to have so little in common with the dandy-looking military man by his side. Indeed, no two men, both morally and physically, could be less like each other. Colonel Mowbray was a tall, thin man, somewhat wrinkled and crow-footed, with keen grey eyes, a beaky nose, and long white hair, beard, and moustache. It was this whiteness of the hair that was his chief characteristic. Soft, thick, and glossy, it was evidently an object well tended; nor was it worn unpicturesquely. The beard, whiskers, and moustache were carefully curled in little dandy ringlets, after the manner of certain men of fashion

in the days of the Regency, whilst the long white hair, also curled, fell over a high black stock and deep turned-down collar. From the peculiar cut of his coat, shape of his hat, manner of his walk, and general air, it was evident that the Colonel belonged to a past generation—the generation presided over by the First Gentleman in Europe and the *viveurs* of the Regency. A few of the young men in the umpire's boat smiled at the airs and graces the old boy gave himself; but there were some who knew the Colonel, and offered it as their opinion that he was “an awful swell; one of the bucks of former days, don't you know?”

“Well, William,” said the parson, “I know we seldom are of one mind on any subject, but I think we are carrying this love of athleticism at the present day a little too far. How many men have been ruined for life just for the empty honour of being in their university boat! It was certainly not with my sanction that Kit went again into training for the race, but the lad wished it, and I——”

“Now, now, Hubert, don’t croak! Remember how you loved the river—think of days gone by at Henley, and of the glories of the 4th of June—and be silent! There! isn’t that a sight worth looking at? Don’t you feel your blood warm as you think that a son of yours is pulling like that? Egad! I wish I could see Lionel taking to boating instead of caring for nothing but shooting pigeons and leading cotillons. Well rowed, sir!”

As Colonel Mowbray said, the sight was indeed well worth looking at. For the first half-a-dozen minutes Cambridge, having started less flurriedly, had gained a slight lead, to the intense delight of her partisans; but soon Kit and his crew began to recover their equanimity, and it was then that, settling down to their oars, Oxford, with the regularity of a machine, and with all her wonted ease, made their boat cleave the lumpy river at the rate of thirty-nine strokes a minute. But Cambridge, owing to her beauty of time and feather, was no mean rival. Kit, fully aware of this, and knowing too that one or two of his men

could not be relied upon till they had gained their second wind, and impressed also with the customary Oxonian idea that for spurt and style Cambridge was magnificent, but that she couldn't "stay," determined to take things quietly and bide his time. Accordingly he eased from thirty-nine strokes to the minute to thirty-seven. The result of this diminution was soon visible. Up to Bishop's Creek the boats had been perfectly level; the keenest eye could see neither of the flags an inch to the fore; rudder to rudder, nose to nose, every swing of the rival crews seemed only to make the struggle more even. But now a palpable difference was apparent. The Cambridge stroke, true to light blue tactics of forcing the pace, had lengthened out to over forty to the minute, and amid the fiercest yells of "Cambridge wins! Light blue's got it all her own way!" Oxford, cool and easy as if she were only rowing an ordinary trial against time, shot past the first osier of Craven a good half-length behind.

"What is Oxford about?" asked a few

young men in the umpire's boat, whose sympathies were evidently in favour of Cambridge. "Why, they aren't in form at all! Bravo, Lincoln, old boy! Well rowed Tufton, old man! Take it easy, Brown! Ah, can't we see daylight now with a vengeance? Crab-tree passed, and a clear length ahead! Well rowed, Cambridge—rowed indeed! What's your stroke doing?" The last remark was addressed to a couple of young men standing near Colonel Mowbray, whose dark blue neckties and button rosettes proclaimed Oxford.

"Oh, he's all right," replied the young men; "he'll be all there when the bell rings. Forty-three a minute never went from Putney to Mortlake yet, and never will, though you have a goodish crew."

"Well, I guess, stranger, we have—and they're showing their excellence, that's more," said the young Cantabs exultingly. "Your stroke's the same man as last year, isn't he?"

"Yes, and about the best we've ever had. I wish he could row for us again; but he took his degree last term, and has cut the

shop. The way he won the 'Diamonds' last year at Henley was the finest thing I ever saw in my life. Eh! he's working up now. Rowed, Oxford! that's more like the old form!"

Still sticking to his plan of biding his time, Kit made no efforts to diminish the boat's length that continued to intervene between the rival eights till off the Distillery. Here he sung out to the cox., "Keep the men together Lynn!" (his crew owing to Cambridge's wash, were rowing a little ragged.) "Eyes in front, and watch backs!" orders the little cox.; and then it was that Kit settled down to that long sweeping stroke of his, which was the admiration of the watermen and the pride of the O.U.B.C. From thirty-seven he increased to thirty-nine strokes in the minute, and by the time Oxford shot Hammersmith Bridge Cambridge was leading by a bare half-length.

"Cambridge wins!" shout the crowd; "first through the bridge always wins!"

Not yet. Hand over hand Oxford was coming to the front with a rush. With

splendid swing and even feather, their stroke had worked up to forty-one the minute, and as the dark blues reached the tail end of Chiswick Eyot, for the first time since Bishop's Creek, the boats were level.

A terrific yell of encouragement thundered over the crews. Men who thought Cambridge was going to win easy and had freely backed their opinions, now looked pale and anxious, whilst those who had maintained their confidence in Oxford were relieved—almost triumphant.

But Cambridge had no intention of seeing her lead forestalled. Her stroke—a splendid oar—called upon his crew with another powerful spurt, and his men, with their short, forward row, answered the call by increasing to a frantic forty-four to the minute. And now from Chiswick Church to Corney Reach ensued as fine a bit of real racing as Old Father Thames ever witnessed. Like surf sped on by a mighty wind, the rival boats, each moved as if by one man, flashed over the water's surface. Neck and neck, not an inch's difference between them—Cambridge rowing her quick snatching

forty-four to the minute, Oxford whipping her oars through with her long heavy swing to between forty and forty-one—light blue and dark blue were straining every nerve for victory. Excitement was at blood heat. The roar of human voices swept through the air like an avalanche. Partisanship was mad with jealous fury. Pale faces flushed, the dullest eye gleamed, the steadiest nerves vibrated. From wharf and bridge, from bank and garden, from deck and steeple, every burning gaze was focussed on the gallant sixteen. The enthusiasm of the hour had passed, too, into the rival crews. With face pale from the fearful strain, with lips firm and hard-set, each man stuck to his oar with a fortitude worthy of Sparta in her doughtiest days, whilst, swaying to and fro, each coxswain cheered on his crew to victory. But it was felt by all that pace like that could not last.

As the boats entered the last long curve which the winding river makes during the course, Kit could not refrain from letting his eyes travel for one brief moment towards his foe. That brief glance was triumph

itself to him. The gallant light blues showed signs of punishment; three of the crew were little more than dead weights; whilst the rowing of the rest, save the stroke was wild and timeless, and the feathering pitifully high. Still Cambridge stuck to her spurt. Kit, too, from the occasional dragging of his boat was aware that some of his men were not so fit as they might have been, and he eased to a long powerful thirty-six a minute. Again the light blue flag shot a few feet to the fore.

"Cambridge wins!" "Oxford is dead beat!" "Well rowed, Cambridge!" roared the crowd, which, human nature-like, loves to be on the winning side.

At the Bull's Head, Cambridge was leading by a good half boat's length, and the wearers of the dark blue thought, like the vanquished at Pavia, that all was lost save honour.

"Now then, Kit, old man," cried Lynn—a wee lad, whose face and figure did much to confirm the Darwinian theory of evolution—"gather yourself together and take her in—Cambridge are all nohow—row-

ing as ragged as blazes—wont take much to lick them! Mind the time, 3! Eyes in the boat, 5! Now then, all together!” And the cox., bending forward, cheered on his men encouragingly. His words struck home. With face somewhat distressed, but lit up by a gleam of triumph, Kit reached out, his crew followed him, and once more the dark blue was flying through the water at forty-one the minute.

A ringing cheer resounded on all sides. The Cambridge men struggled, but in vain, to make a fight of it. Hand over hand rowed Oxford—time and feather simply perfection—and shot by the light blue, oar by oar, as they dashed under Barnes Bridge. Like the last flicker of an exhausted candle, Cambridge called upon her men, and for a few brief moments another fierce spurt was maintained. But the hottest admirer of the gallant light blue felt that the race was over, and that it was all finished but the shouting. By the time Oxford had reached the Brewery, Cambridge was two lengths behind, distressed, defeated but not dishonoured.

And now loud yelled the crowd, and bang!

bang! boomed the cannon, as dark blue, fresh as paint, sent her boat past the winning-post, and Cambridge, toiling astern, heard the voice of the judge cry out, "By four clear lengths!" And so the race was over, and Oxford scored another victory to her already long roll of successive triumphs.

"Clothe up! paddle back!"





CHAPTER II.

THE BROTHERS.

ANY ONE in the slightest degree acquainted with Bighshire knows perfectly well that the family of Mowbray is among the oldest of its landed gentry. There are, it is true, certain bilious squires and cynical parvenus in the county who cast reflections upon the antiquity of the present Mowbrays, and affirm that the broad lands around Yllton-Tyrell were purchased three generations ago by a Mowbray who had made his money in beer from a Mowbray who had lost his money in racing, and that between the two Mowbrays there is not the slightest blood relationship. But this I class with that spite and envy which constitute so important an element in all

scandal, both rural and urban, and therefore dismiss as unworthy of credence.

Indeed I think I am wise in so doing, for on no point is Colonel Mowbray, the present proprietor of Yllton-Tyrell and member for the western division of his county, more touchy than upon the antiquity of his pedigree. He admits that his grandfather *did* make his fortune in malt, and that he became the owner of Yllton by purchase. But what he does *not* admit is, that his grandfather was neither a lineal nor collateral descendant of the old Mowbrays who date from the Conquest, and who made their name, as we all know, illustrious in the Crusades. On the contrary, he vehemently affirms, and shows you as evidence numerous documents copied from Pipe and Patent rolls, plainly proving that not only was his grandfather one of the ancient Mowbrays, but that he was the representative of the *elder* branch of the line, and that it was owing to a gross piece of legal fraud, practised after the wars of the Roses, that the Yllton estate passed into the hands of a younger branch of the family. In the old

Tudor hall of the Colonel's mansion, among the stags' heads, pikes, armour, and stuffed birds, there hangs a most careful and elaborate genealogical tree, which sets forth every alliance and issue of the Mowbrays, and at the same time clearly shows by the current of its pedigree that there is not the slightest doubt about the present Mowbray being the elder branch of the family, and consequently the legitimate owner of Yllton. The sarcastic squires and parvenus aforesaid let fly many a bitter shaft against this tree, and say that it was concocted by a well-known record agent in London and a clerk in the Heralds' College. "His grandfather one of *our* De Mowbrays!" they laugh contemptuously, "why he was a common publican, who when he made his fortune in liquor looked about the country for a family seat, owned by some people of his own name, and luckily found one which wanted a buyer—that's the real history of *his* family!"

You may be sure, however, that to Colonel Mowbray himself these unkind things were never repeated. The county treated him with every consideration and attention, for

the Colonel was not only wealthy, a generous host, a liberal landlord (who strictly preserved though, as became a fine old country gentleman), but as good a man as any shire need wish within its borders. Of course he had his faults, as we all have. That little weakness about the antiquity of his family amounted almost to a fault; but *que voulez vous?* in these levelling days a man of ancient race may be somewhat pardoned for talking a little too much about his ancestors—especially if they do not belong to him. Then, again, the Colonel was slightly haughty in his manner to his inferiors and to those he deemed as such; but to his social superiors and the county magnates around he was extremely agreeable. Indeed the petty squirearchy had the impertinence to say that “Mowbray was a toady;” but in the country if one does not abuse one’s neighbour what becomes of those long afternoon calls and five o’clock teas? However, I do not pretend to vindicate the character of the Colonel, or to set him up as a model for imitation. It was his boast that he was a thorough man of the world,

one who estimated men, manners, principles, and in fact everything, by the standard set up by society. That word "society" was a very favourite one of his—perhaps he was even a little too fond of it. We are apt to think that a man who is always talking about it is not after all such good style as he affects, nor so conversant with its ways as he pretends. However, the Colonel was not of this way of thinking. Society was all in all to him, and he laid down the law about it most dogmatically. His friends knew perfectly well that there was no use of further arguing any matter with him when once he said in his grand manner, "Such a thing would not for a moment be permitted by society," or, "You cannot do a thing like that in society." In the eyes of the Colonel it was the most heinous offence ever to oppose the verdict of Mrs. Grundy.

Now Colonel Mowbray's brother was as little influenced by the opinions of "society" as it was possible for any civilized man to be. Between the Rev. Hubert Mowbray, rector of St. Winifrid's and a canon of St.

Paul's, and his elder brother William it was impossible to institute any sort of comparison whatever. Each was the antithesis of the other. The Colonel set up to be, as I have said, a thorough man of the world—one whose life and conduct were to be guided alone by social principles and maxims. The parson was, on the contrary, as guileless of the ways of the world as a child—any one could deceive him, and many so did. To him the world was a collection of more or less wicked people, to whom it was his duty as a priest to preach, to advise, and very often to avoid. And most earnestly and consistently he did all three.

The father of the two brothers, "the son of the publican," as some of the Bighshire neighbours called him, was a man of simple, quiet tastes, utterly indifferent to the pedigree of the Mowbrays, but very much engrossed in improving and adorning their late property. He resolved that his sons should have every advantage of education, in order to be fit for any position they might be called upon to occupy. The elder brother, William, was sent to Eton, where he gained

a great reputation for knocking off Latin verses, and for his taste in dress. He early, too, displayed that very un-English *penchant* for the society of the great. - Nearly all his schoolboy friends and acquaintances were lordlings of high degree, and he excluded all poor baronets as not good enough for his set. At Christ Church he was still more influenced by this peculiarity. As a gentleman commoner it became his lot to be thrown into contact with various Tufts, many of whom he had known at Eton, and William Mowbray was not the man to lose any social opportunities. Young noble lords accordingly came down to Yllton for the hunting and shooting, and "Beau Mowbray," as he was called, became in his turn the guest of his great friends. It was about this time that William made that genealogical discovery in his pedigree of which I have spoken, and which rather astonished his simple father, who up to that time had been ignorant, I am given to understand, of the antiquity of his family. But William had' no intention of following his sire's example and of letting the candle of his

ancient origin hide under the bushel of his grandfather's beer vat. "A man of family in these days," said the elder son, "must show that he is a man of family;" and certainly no one could accuse young Mowbray of not acting up to his words. He constantly introduced the antiquity of his branch of the family into conversation; had the pedigree hung up in the hall; was eloquent in the picture gallery of Yllton upon the deeds of his ancestors; and in short could not have talked more about the Mowbrays if he had been a pretender. But he was not a pretender, except, perhaps, to certain in his own county. To the world at large he was the elder son of Mowbray of Yllton, and in the houses of the great that he visited during the long was treated with that attention and courtesy which society loves to pay to a man of birth and future wealth.

Shortly after Beau Mowbray left Oxford he entered the Grenadiers. It had been the intention of Mr. Mowbray that his son should go to the bar for a few years, and thus fit himself for his duties as a county

magistrate and a probable member of parliament. But young Mowbray infinitely preferred, to the dry, hum-drum calling of a barrister, a profession which would allow him not only a great deal of leisure, but which at the same time possessed many social attractions very dear to his heart. For some few years Mowbray led the usual life of a young man of fashion. His love for the society of the great, combined with his reputation as "a ladies' man," kept him free from much which so often leads frivolous youth astray. To be dissipated or fast was in William Mowbray's eyes bad *ton*. He was fond of art, pictures, china, and perhaps was one of the best judges of old fiddles in the three kingdoms—indeed his judgment at Christie's was never called in question. He did not care for racing, betting, gambling, or any of the other vicious "ings." Indeed, he had rather the reputation of being a religious man. The religion of the Beau, however, like that of many of his type, chiefly served to make him feel uncomfortable when he went wrong, not to keep him from wrong. But young Mowbray always evinced as he

said, "a great respect for religion." The truth was he saw that there was something intensely respectable, in being under the influence of a gentleman-like—I cannot call it religion, but homage to religion. No cant, or narrow-minded bigotry, or anything of that sort ; but a good, social kind of Christianity, which told him to be outwardly moral and discreet in his conduct ; to go to church always in the country, and, when convenient, sometimes in town ; to be on good terms with his vicar ; and to subscribe occasionally to well-advertised charities. All this Mowbray obeyed to the very letter, and the obedience, united to his fortune and good looks, made him the *bien venu* in London society. The men said he was "good style ;" old women that he was "charming," young women that he was "very nice ;" and so the Beau was far from being unpopular.

The result of this popularity was that shortly after obtaining his company he married Lady Selina Rusthall, the eldest daughter of the Most Honourable the Marquis of Tunbridge, the head of one of the great lead-

ing houses of England. Two years after his marriage his father died. Colonel Mowbray now sold out, and as the owner of the broad lands of Yllton-Tyrell, soon made a very prominent position for himself in the county—so prominent that at the end of three years he was asked to stand for its western division, of course in the Tory interest. The Colonel did not require much pressing, and being known as a wealthy proprietor, a popular landlord, and the son-in-law of the powerful Marquis of Tunbridge, came in at the head of the poll, defeating by a large majority Mr. Blogges, the Liberal candidate, whom the political committee of the Reform Club had sent down to contest the election. At the time when we meet him he had represented the county for the last twenty years.

Canon Mowbray was, as I have said, a very different man from his brother. At Eton he was one of the wildest of the wild, and had barely escaped expulsion for snaring a deer in the Home Park. His conduct at King's, Cambridge, was somewhat more moderate, and, thanks to the system of

privilege then in vogue, he was elected one of its Fellows. It was about this time that he had an awful dream, which made such a terrible impression on his mind, already somewhat weakened from dissipation, that he began to think seriously about many things which 'until then he had never thought seriously of before. Sensitive, nervous, and imaginative, he now went through almost the same mental agony as John Bunyan suffered when he believed he had committed the unpardonable sin. Accordingly he resolved, with God's blessing, to lead a new life, and by a severe and zealous future do all in his power to expiate the past. He took holy orders, and became a curate in one of the most squalid districts in London.

There for five years he laboured patiently and obscurely among his debased and wretched flock. His name was beloved by all the poor around, and none who sought him went away uncheered by kindly advice, or unrelieved by generous help. But soon nervous doubts began to disquiet him. His sensitive conscience had for some time past

been preying morbidly on a frame never very strong, and he had come to the conclusion that unless certain doctrines promulgated by the Church of England were changed he could not consistently remain within her pale. His views were wholly and absolutely what is termed Evangelical, and as he found many statements and directions in the Prayer Book which he thought inconsistent with true Evangelicism, he coined certain words and phrases which he inserted in the services for Baptism, in the Visitation of the Sick, and in the Absolution, which the Prayer Book never contained, but which he thought more suitable for the occasion. His congregation accordingly were offended, and he was reprimanded by his vicar. He replied that certain passages in the Prayer Book were repugnant to him, and that his conscience would not permit him to read or teach them. The vicar endeavoured to argue the matter, but in vain. Hubert Mowbray saw that there was only one honest course open for him to adopt. As long as he was a member of the Church of England it was his duty to teach what the Church taught.

If he did otherwise he was a traitor in the camp. Was he not a traitor? He felt that he was, and he resigned his curacy. As he himself frankly admitted in after life, he acted at that time upon impressions, not convictions; upon impulse, not upon searching investigation or mature deliberation.

By the death of his father and of a wealthy aunt, of whom he was the favourite nephew, he had been, a year or two back, left in possession of a good fortune. This fortune he resolved to devote entirely to religious purposes. Young, energetic, and endowed with considerable eloquence, the good that such a man could have effected was considerable. But unfortunately Hubert Mowbray fell into the hands of the designing, and much of the good that he wished to do was misdirected. Nervous to such a degree that his emotional feelings were easily worked upon, and utterly unpractical and inexperienced, as men of his calling frequently are, he was no difficult subject to victimize. In quitting the Church he had remained for a whole year without attaching himself to any religious community—content with re-

garding and examining the doctrines of the various sects outside the pale of Episcopacy. At last he enrolled himself as a member of a certain body, of trans-Atlantic origin, then coming into notice at Cambridge, called the "True Fold." Hubert Mowbray was no man to do things by halves. Once under the impression that the step he had taken was the right one, no power on earth could make him swerve. He believed he was now so assured, for he felt that the sect among whom he had been enrolled was one well worthy of adoption. His heart opened to men who had the names of sacred things ever on their lips, who lived only, as he imagined, for good works, who affected to be a brotherhood of Christian saints—a band of chosen men isolated from the world, among whom were to be naught but love, sympathy, and apostolic affection. Hubert Mowbray was not difficult to deceive—he believed his neighbours to be, not what they were, but what they pretended they were; which is not unfrequently a very different thing. The "True Fold" found him an easy prey.

And he was their prey. To such a schem-

ing band, a man of wealth, of some social position, of a University education—a man, in short, endowed with those attributes and advantages which, in the eyes of most Englishmen, constitute the character of a gentleman—was a rarity, and they made the most of him. He was their “converted brother,” their “beloved friend,” their “shining star,” the “brand plucked from the burning.” The brethren of the “True Fold” were the only true Church, the only true brotherhood on earth. Between such holy men all things should be common; what one possessed the other should share. Most gladly would they share all they had with their dear brother Mowbray—they yearned after him as Jonathan yearned after David, and why should anything divide such love? At least let it not be such a vulgar thing, such contemptible dross, as money. “All theirs,” they said beamingly to their gentle victim, “should be his.” But unfortunately the “all” of the “True Fold” amounted to nothing, and when people have nothing to give they are not unusually very generous in offering it. Now Hubert Mowbray was a fairly

wealthy man—at least he had a fortune of something like thirty thousand pounds—and believing that he was serving the interests of religion, he gladly made common cause with the shining lights of his new sect. He built chapels and schools all over the country; he subscribed most liberally to all “True Fold” charities; he supported a whole staff of missionaries in Cornwall, in the Black Country, and in South Wales, to preach to the miners—in fact he was the milch cow of the flock, and most freely gave his milk.

To the Colonel the conduct of his brother was incomprehensible. That a man should quit the Church, give up a fellowship which admitted him among a refined and well-bred community, and prefer instead the society of a ranting, self-seeking body, composed entirely of the lower orders, was hard indeed to be understood by his mundane mind. But what troubled him the most was that his brother’s fortune was rapidly dwindling. “A time will come,” said he to his wife, “when Hubert will see through these abominable people he has got entan-

gled with, and re-enter the Church, and then what will become of him when his money is gone? Well, on his own head lies the future. I have spoken to him till I'm weary! The 'True Fold' indeed! I'd fifty times rather he had turned Roman Catholic, for there *are* gentlemen amongst them—till the reign of Queen Anne we Mowbrays were all staunch Catholics, you know, dear!—but a 'True Foldite,' or whatever he calls himself—bah!"

At last it came to pass as the Colonel had foretold. Hubert Mowbray was beginning to be undeceived. He saw the sect to which he belonged, which had the name of love and brotherhood always on its lips, and frequently a still more sacred name, full of malice, uncharitableness, and ignorant bigotry. Several, too, of his shining lights had been guilty of acts of the grossest vice, and were expelled the community. His pet missionary, the "Converted Tinker," who had been preaching all over the country, and who on the strength of Brother Mowbray's recommendations had been received very kindly by many of the upper middle-classes

in the Dissenting world, had been sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment for beating his wife in a drunken fit, and well nigh killing her. And then the solicitor who drew up the leases for his schools and chapels, and who was also a Brother, begged and prayed that some two thousand pounds might be advanced for the purpose of "promoting the cause." Mr. Mowbray, as usual, advanced the money; but the only "cause" it promoted was the flight of the solicitor to America, who had embezzled whatever he could lay hands on. There were other causes, too numerous to mention, which also now began to excite suspicion in the mind of our conscientious friend respecting the people he had got amongst. He resolved to be on the watch. There is no one so suspicious as the unsuspicious man whose suspicions are finally awakened. Mr. Mowbray was now in that condition, and keenly he criticised his brethren and analysed their motives. The scales fell from his eyes at last. He saw the community to which he belonged in its right colours—its blasphemous hypocrisy, its

narrow-minded ignorance, its utter want of principle in its dealings with its fellow men—the whole false tenor of its conduct, and the errors of its teaching. He felt himself reluctantly forced to admit that the Brethren were the Tartuffes of religion.

And now there appeared on the scene an old King's College friend who had been appointed to a Crown living close to where Brother Mowbray prosecuted his mission labours. The friends had not met for years, not since Mowbray had quitted the Church of England, and the meeting was a sincere pleasure to both. To the quondam Anglican clergyman it was full of important results. As his mind had been disquieted by certain doctrinal matters when in the Church, so now was he troubled about the sect he had attached himself to. That he had given up his fellowship, parted with a considerable portion of his fortune, descended in the social scale, were as naught in his eyes. His wish was to give up all and follow his Master; but was he following his Master in his present occupation and position?—that was the thought which dis-

quieted him, and frankly he expressed his doubts to his friend. You can imagine the result of their conversation. His friend, a sincere and earnest man, one fully after Mowbray's own heart, by argument and advice, diplomatically given, showed the "True Foldite" that there had never been any occasion for his withdrawal from the Church of England—that there were many in the Church who held precisely the same views on certain doctrinal points as he entertained—that to hold such views and yet be a consistent member of the Church of England was not incompatible—that it was necessary there should be great diversity of opinions in a Church which set up to be a National Church, and therefore built on a broad and liberal basis, &c. &c. And, to make a long story short, the arguments of his friend prevailed, and Mowbray was received again into the bosom of the Anglican Church. The "True Fold" had, however, shorn his wool to no slight extent during the few years he was among them, for he left in their hands something like fifteen thousand pounds. I believe to this

day the "Fold" pray for him as "for one who was once their brother, but who has now relapsed into sin."

At the end of four or five years, thanks to the interest of the Marquis of Tunbridge, Hubert Mowbray was appointed to the rectory of St. Winifrid's, one of the best and most important livings in London. At first the appointment was somewhat severely criticised, for Mowbray was then only thirty-seven, and St. Winifrid's was a parish of such importance, and so liberally endowed, that its vicar was generally regarded as on the high road to a bishopric, or at least to a deanery. But Hubert Mowbray soon showed of what stuff he was made. Energetic and zealous to an almost morbid extent, he worked his parish as it had never been worked before. His name soon appeared conspicuous among the leading London clergy. His sermons, though devoid of scholarship, were full of eloquence, earnestness, and originality. A decided partisan of the Low Church party, it was soon apparent that Hubert Mowbray was just the man to suit St. Winifrid's—a parish

that had always been strictly Evangelical in its tone. His sweetness of manner, his exquisite simplicity of character, his fervent but never intrusive piety, made him beloved by all. His church became thronged. When he took the chair at an Evangelical drawing-room conversazione the meeting was sure to be a success. His little books on passing religious topics met with an immense sale. "Cross-wearers and Cross-bearers; or, Thoughts on Ritualism;" "Tossed on the Billows; or, The Mariner's True Compass," are those he is the best known by. The name of Mowbray was a pillar of strength in itself when announced to plead at Exeter Hall for all good causes, or for any of the Evangelical societies. His monthly sermons for children were attended by almost every child in the parish; his Bible classes for servants, his night schools for the poor, his Monday lectures to ladies, his Wednesday addresses to young men, his Sunday evening communions—indeed everything he took in hand turned out most successfully. *Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.*

And he had his reward in the love and

respect that all bore him. Nor did he lack rewards of a more substantial character. He was elected a canon of St. Paul's, and was soon afterwards appointed one of the chaplains in ordinary to the Queen. Twice he had been offered an important colonial bishopric, but both times refused—"he wanted then," he said, "no other see than his dear parish of St. Winifrid's." No man better represented both the power and dignity of work than our worthy parson.

Shortly after his appointment to St. Winifrid's, he married, much to the Colonel's annoyance, the sister of one of his curates, a young lady of no fortune and of moderate birth. The Colonel had endeavoured to impress upon his brother that the only course now open to him for the retrieval of his crippled fortunes was a brilliant marriage. But the vicar viewed matters very differently from his brother, and resolved that if his heart could not follow his hand, his hand should never be offered at all. In the charms and character of Miss Ashleigh, the daughter of a poor colonel of artillery,

Hubert Mowbray soon began to feel that if the object of his love would only accept him there would be no difficulty about that connexion between his hand and his heart. He proposed, and was accepted. From this marriage sprang three children—my hero, Kit, and his two sisters, Rosa and Georgie, who must introduce themselves as this story proceeds.





CHAPTER III.

THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION.

IT was the morning after the race. Canon Mowbray and his brother were seated in the study of the parsonage of St. Winifrid's, which, as is well known, is the corner house of St. Ethelburga Terrace. The Colonel was toasting his feet on the fender, and arranging the *Times* in a convenient position for perusal, whilst his brother was looking through the advertisements of the *Guardian*.

"I'm afraid," muttered the Canon, as his finger pointed down the various advertisements, "that I shall not be able to assist Mr. Reid in his wishes."

"Who is Mr. Reid, and what does he want?" asked the Colonel.

"A friend of mine—vicar of a country

parish—who asked me to look out for a curate for him ; but he only offers seventy pounds and a title, and that nowadays is much too small.”

“Too small !” broke in the Colonel, “ why it is abominable ! Fancy giving a man who has undergone all the expense of a University education, and who occupies the position of a gentleman, less than a head keeper and infinitely less than a London butler ! It is monstrous ! I am delighted to find that University men refrain from entering the Church to begin life on such a pittance.”

“It is very difficult indeed to get curates at the present day who are either Oxford or Cambridge men, as I found to my cost when looking for them, and I believe I pay rather more—thanks to my canonry—than the generality of London rectors.” Indeed, the good man, rather than offer the miserable sums which are generally paid, stinted himself in his personal expenditure in order the better to increase the incomes of his fellow clergymen.

“Well, it is a very suicidal policy of the Church,” said the Colonel ; “the influence

of the Church of England depends much upon its social tone; society has a social antipathy to Dissenters, and a religious antipathy to Roman Catholics, but the clergy of the Church of England combine social influence with moderate teaching, and the two go hand in hand very well, and just suit our English tastes. But if the Church is to be filled by literates, St. Bees men *et hoc genus omne*, as it is being filled now—society won't worship! It is all very well, my dear Hubert, to shrug your shoulders, and to say that what you want in a parson is piety and zeal, and so forth, but let me tell you society likes its parish priest or curate to be what is termed a gentleman, and unless he's a gentleman, all his piety in the world will make precious little impression upon the congregation. What respect can you have for a man like the Curate of St. Lazarus, who drops every *h* in the English language, and talks about 'aving ears to 'ear let them 'ear—'Oly 'oly 'oly—and is always offering up his 'umble and 'arty thanks?' I believe he is a zealous man and all that kind of thing, but if he had less zeal

and better manners his flock would like him far better."

"And yet, my dear William, all the refinement and breeding of this world will not prepare a man for the next. We ought to make allowances for men who have been deprived of advantages of education that we have enjoyed, and not to judge our neighbours harshly. If a man's heart is right, that is the great thing."

"I'm sure I don't want to judge my neighbour harshly, and as for making allowances, depend upon it the best allowance you could make to your friend at St. Lazarus would be an increase of salary." And the old fellow grinned as if he had said a witticism.

"I have nothing whatever to do with the curate of St. Lazarus," replied the Canon; "but yet in defence of my order I must say I believe his rector gives him as much as he can afford. A man with a living of three hundred and fifty pounds can't spend much on a curate. If the livings were better endowed depend on it the curates would be better off: the fault lies with that abstract

community you are always talking about—society.”

“Oh, the Church to a man without interest or fortune is a wretched profession!” yawned the Colonel, taking up the *Times*.

“It is not a profession at all,” replied the Canon, “it is a mission. I pity the man, be he vicar or curate, who enters the Church for its mundane advantages; his life can be only one of constant self-reproach and unhappiness.”

“I don’t agree with you at all,” said the Colonel. “I intend Arthur for the Church; as livings go, Yllton is not a bad provision for a younger son.”

“But, William,” said his brother, looking up from his paper gravely, “suppose Arthur is not suited for the sacred calling of a Minister of the Gospel; suppose that his life and conduct prove incompatible with such a position?”

“Oh!” laughed the Colonel, “I dare say he will be perfectly suited for any position that brings him in some eight hundred a year, a good parsonage, and no lack of agreeable society in the neighbourhood.

Besides," added the speaker, testily, "there is nothing else for him to get nowadays, and so, *nolens volens*, he must make up his mind to take orders—younger sons can't be choosers."

"You talked just now about the Church losing its social tone," said the Canon, spelling through the advertisements; "all I can say is, I would a thousand times rather have a man like the curate of St. Lazarus, in spite of all his faults of pronunciation and breeding, as my colleague, than one, who, though he may give a social gloss to his profession, is after all only a hireling in the fold. One real Christian is worth all the Chesterfields put together."

"Ah, well; I know, Hubert, you and I look at things from a very different point of view. But, talking about professions, what do you intend doing about Kit? It's high time you thought of something for him. He's done with Oxford now, hasn't he?"

"Yes, entirely. I really am quite perplexed what profession he should enter. The only one in which I have any interest

is my own, and for that he does not seem inclined, and God forbid that I should ever press him to act contrary to his wishes on that point. And yet, of course he must do something; he will have but a very small patrimony of his own at my death."

"Oh, of course he must do something," said the Colonel; "but in the present crowded state of the professions, the difficulty is to know which one to choose. If it were not for these abominable Radicals, Tunbridge's interest might have been of service to you, but nowadays, what with competitive examinations, and a Government going in for mob popularity, there is not an appointment worth having. Everything is to be merit, merit, merit," continued he, contemptuously, "and a nice hole it has put us gentry into; bah! merit is the death of patronage."

"Well, I don't grumble at that," said the Canon; "it seems only fair that the best man should win. As education increases, so must we expect the decrease of class privileges."

"Education!" broke in the Colonel; "and a fine pass we are coming to with our

education. As I said in the House only two nights ago, the classes you have to fear nowadays are not the working classes you hear so much of, but the educated classes—the men whom their education unfits for manual labour and the petty branches of trade, whilst their brains, when put into the professions, only wear themselves out in the fierce struggle of competing in an overstocked market. We are on the eve of a social revolution, Hubert—a social revolution.” And the Colonel put himself into a parliamentary attitude.

“That is very true,” said the Canon. “I don’t see what there is for a young man to do. Everywhere you turn you hear the same cry—supply much more than the demand. I did once think of the Indian Civil Service, but then it would have interfered with Kit’s University education, and now he is too old to try for it.”

“Oh, I don’t think much of that for a profession—banishment for life, with the prospect of a judgeship when you are too ill to enjoy the fruit of your labour. Besides, since they have opened it to public

competition, it has lost much of its prestige; the last man who got in was the son of a blacksmith, I am told. Nor is it, when you consider the rate of expenditure one has to live at in India, such an excellent thing in a pecuniary point of view as people imagine. I was only talking last week at the Athenæum with the Chief Justice of Baroda, now home on sick leave with a liver as big as a pulpit cushion, and he said that almost all the nice little pickings which belonged to the old Haileybury days have been knocked on the head. It's really quite abominable that men whose ancestors have had a stake in the country for the last eight centuries, as we Mowbrays have, should, when they enter upon their career, be treated on the same level with men who perhaps never had a grandfather——"

"Who was a successful brewer," added the parson laughing.

"Well, there is no disgrace in that, Hubert!" said the Colonel, rather nettled; "some of the first families in the land owe the salvation of their estates to successful commercial enterprises. If the brewery had

been the foundation of our family it would have been different ; but to beer we owe not our origin, but our restoration."

"And then I was thinking of the Home Civil Service," said the parson, turning the conversation, for he knew his brother's weakness.

"Oh, don't think of it for a moment," replied the Colonel ; "the good old days are passed when interest would have got a young man something worth having—a secretaryship, comptrollership and the like. Now, the lowest clerkship has to be obtained by competitive examinations, and when it is obtained it isn't worth having. I really don't know what we are coming to!" ejaculated the elder brother, gravely, and stroking the *Times* on his knee. "Soon I believe that there will not be a single sinecure in the country—it is perfectly disgraceful!"

"Then, William, what do you advise?" said the parson, sitting near his brother. "The Bar would suit Kit, I think ; indeed, he has just been called, but then it is so crowded."

"Oh, he has no chance there at all! To

succeed at the Bar you must either be a son of a judge or marry a solicitor's daughter. What interest have we to push him on? and unless a man has interest it is an awful career to choose. If we could give him a start he might do well enough, but beyond our family lawyer, I don't know such a creature as a solicitor. Look at young Oyer, Lord Terminer's son, he tells me that men of family and talent are glad enough to get briefs, even at the Old Bailey, because the bar is so overstocked. Tunbridge might, at my recommendation, get him a revising barristership, but that is all we could do for him, and that is little enough."

"There is the army," began the Canon; "but then I fear he is too old to try for a staff appointment; and besides, it is a poor——"

"Oh, the army," said the Colonel, "is not a profession, but an occupation; besides, the service is going to the dogs!" added he, testily, "and no wonder when there are such a lot of puppies in it."

"What would you say, then, to commerce?" inquired the Canon, smiling;

“everybody says that trade offers magnificent openings.”

“No doubt about it,” replied the Colonel; “but then in trade you ought to begin life at thirteen or fourteen as a clerk, or come to London with only three-halfpence and a wheelbarrow, and trust to luck and hard work to get you on; or else you want capital—nowadays large capital—and that Kit has not. Perhaps, if Kit were a Peer and a bankrupt, he might start a wine agency with success, but——”

Just then the study door opened, and in walked the object of their discussion.

“Well, Kit,” said the uncle, shaking hands with his nephew, and regarding the young fellow with a look of genuine admiration, “none the worse for your efforts of yesterday? We were just talking of you.”

“Not abusing me, Uncle William, I hope?” said the young man, laughing.

“We were talking about your future prospects, my boy,” said the Canon.

“You ought to think seriously now of entering a profession, Kit,” began his uncle.

"There are few young men who have arrived at your age who have not only settled what they are going to be, but are even established in their professions. Has it ever entered into your mind that you will have to work for your livelihood?"

"Put me in the way of working for it, uncle, and I promise you it will be from no fault of mine if I don't pursue the path. But what is there to do? I'm called to the Bar, but I have no chance of practising. You couldn't ask Lord Tunbridge for something; he has a good deal of interest with both parties?"

"Oh, but I am afraid there is nothing to ask for, as I have just told your father," said the Colonel; "but I shall be seeing Tunbridge shortly, and if he can do anything for you I am sure he will be very happy."

The present Marquis of Tunbridge was the son of the late minister, and consequently the Colonel's brother-in-law. He was a man very much thought of, and had refused office in the Coalition Government.

"I have a great mind," said Kit, sitting down by his uncle, "to do what Chichester of Oriel is going to do—emigrate to New Zealand, and make my fortune sheep-farming."

"Make your fortune!" laughed the Colonel; "spend it you mean! Emigration with half of you young men generally means living on your capital for some two or three years at the best towns in the colonies, and then coming home penniless. What did young Lionel Seede, nephew of my friend the Duchess of Carraway, do? Why, he went to Melbourne with some ten thousand pounds, intending to become a sheep farmer, found that there were various discouraging obstacles to be overcome, but also found that Melbourne was a delightful place to live at; and the result was he mistook his capital for his income, and at the end of three years was a pauper, and is now, I believe, selling milk in the streets at Ballarat."

"I am sure that Kit has a great deal too much principle and common sense ever to do such a thing as that," said the father, looking at his boy affectionately.

"Well, I should be sorry," muttered the Colonel, "to place much faith either in the principle or common sense of youth." But his remark was not overheard. "However, I hope," he added out loud, "that we shall be able to get you something without sending you out of the country."

A servant now entered, and announced that luncheon was ready.

"You will stop lunch with us, William?" asked his brother.

The Colonel consented, on the condition that Kit should walk across the park with him afterwards.

"Your aunt has an 'at home' this afternoon, and I'm sure she will be very glad to see you."

Kit said he would be charmed to "assist;" and the trio walked across the hall to the dining-room.



CHAPTER IV.

KIT.

AT the time when we make young Mowbray's acquaintance he had but recently left Oxford. His career through the University, if it had not been one of remarkable brilliancy, had at least been respectable. He had taken a First in Classics in Moderations, and had not boating interfered with his studies, it was said that he would have taken a First also in Greats ; as it was he had to content himself with a second class, and a first in Law and Modern History. He had tried for the Newdigate and had failed, but an essay which he wrote on the Crusaders and their effect upon civilization, gained him the Arnold, whilst another on the Renaissance had gained him the Stanhope. His friends said,

that had he only exerted himself and not gone in for the boat, he would have got a fellowship; but Kit's friends were all very kindly disposed to him, and no doubt exaggerated the strength of his intellectual calibre. At all events, when he left the University, both dons and men were sorry to lose him, and he carried up with him to London the best wishes from all for his future welfare. During the whole term of his residence at Alma Mater, he had constituted a striking exception to the proverb, that "Clergymen's sons are always the worst;" for none had worn more patently the white flower of a blameless life.

"I part with you, Mr. Mowbray," said the worthy master of his college, "with sincere regret. The prominent position you have occupied during the last two years in the athletic world, coupled with the regularity of your conduct and the obedience you have paid to all our laws and rules, have been productive of much good; you have shown young men that it is possible to be manly without coarseness, and popular without vice. I have never found you

act otherwise than as a gentleman, and I shall hope that in after-life you will not be unmindful of the days you have spent among us. Whatever your career may be I wish you every success in it. Good-bye, Mr. Mowbray! Good-bye, and may God bless you!"

This eulogium was not wholly undeserved. At a time when the University was filled with men who looked upon irreligion as a proof of intellect, scandalous doings as a mark of pluck, and the open pursuit of vice as a sign of fashion, young Mowbray, though without any of the cant and asceticism which certain coteries were then introducing, sternly set his face against both free thought and free action. The temptations to which youth so often succumbs he resisted with a severity which, had he not been genial and kindly withal, would have militated much against his popularity. He shunned gambling of all kinds, and by his moral courage and advice was instrumental in saving more than one man, who perhaps but a few weeks before had been birched at Eton, from the clutches of

men whose thoughts never ran beyond unlimited loo, pool *ecarté*, and chicken hazard. But at the same time, all knew that for a good rubber the best rooms in Oxford were those of Mowbray of Balliol, only the points were low and betting forbidden. Hard drinking was, it is true, much on the decline when Kit went up to the University, but still there were a good many men whose "wines" as often as not ended in Bacchanalian orgies. With these Mowbray had very scant dealings, and the friends who dropped into his room after Hall, knew perfectly well that though the introduction of subjects into their conversation which ought to have been left untouched, would bring no rebuke from their host's lips, their presence would never be asked a second time. Again, Kit failed to see either the fun or the manliness of breaking rules simply because they were rules, or of shirking the various duties incidental to his position. He had yet to learn that it was a sign of the best taste to be considered superior to all moral restraints, and to the dictates of good breeding.

And yet he had not set up for a saint. He had a high idea of self-respect, and a proper feeling for what was due to others. It was much, but still it was not all. Though considered by some almost as a pious man, he knew that he could lay claim to no high order of piety, and it was for that reason he had declined taking holy orders. But when a young man is moral, he is not unfrequently among his set put down as being religious. And so it fell to his share, as it has fallen to many a better man before him, to be greeted at times with that quiet ridicule which men have so often to meet who differ from their fellows.

But the shafts flung at him were never very keen. It became soon known that Mowbray was a very good fellow, and "though rather strict, don't you know," one who greatly improved on acquaintance. No man could deny his courage, for he soon showed that there was not a better rider to hounds in the whole of the shire. Then it began to be discovered that he spoke well at the Union, and was a good man all round at sports; could hold his own not unevenly at

rackets, fives, billiards, and in the cricket-field. From Eton he had brought up a high reputation as "an oar," and he was soon put into his college boat. Thus after encountering the first dislike which opposition so often engenders, his good qualities began to be weighed in the balance, and to meet with the reward they deserved. Men spoke of him with respect, and were not slow in admitting that he was a decided acquisition. Amongst young men who are not yet hardened by contact with the world, the influence possessed by one of their order who thinks and acts like a gentleman, who leads a pure life, and who is at the same time genial and generous, is very considerable. And so it was with Kit. Before he had been up a year he was looked upon as one of the representative men of the University. He had proved his ability in the schools, he had done good work in the cricket-field and at the athletic sports, and he was the rising hope of the O.U.B.C.

It was found that though his views on many matters were not in harmony with

those of his fellows, and though he strongly maintained the distinction between love and sensuality, wit and *double entendre*, he was still excellent company, and a man whom it was impossible to dislike. It was known that he came of a good stock and was well connected, and this had its weight with his fellows. He dressed and looked like a gentleman—another point in his favour amongst young men; then he was no milk-sop, and was known to be a man in whom the strictest confidence could be placed; and so from being liked he soon became a favourite. In his second year, when he took his seat in the boat, he was one of the most popular men at Oxford, and because all respected him his popularity was more solid and influential than is generally the case. There was, therefore, truth in the remark of the Master that he had been “manly without coarseness and popular without vice.”

On quitting the University Kit returned to his father's roof, and, Micawber-like, waited for something to turn up. He had been called to the Bar, and had made a pretence

of going down occasionally to Lincoln's Inn to read what he was pleased to term law—which meant more often than not looking at the titles of books, lunching with a friend in chambers, and then strolling down to his club. Knowing no solicitors and having no special interest in the legal profession, he may be excused for being speedily discouraged with his prospects and declaring to the Canon that it was useless his swelling the overcrowded ranks of the briefless.

“But, my boy, what will you do then?” said the Canon over and over again. “You must do something—you cannot lead the life of an idle man—your portion will be but a small one.”

“Oh, I hope Uncle William will be able to befriend me; he must get something if he exerts himself. What's the use of having a brother-in-law in the Government if you can't get places for your relations?” said Kit.

“He says those days are past; but still I hope he may be useful to you,” sighed the Canon, “for I see nothing to put you into.”

The Colonel was now acting a very kindly

part to his nephew. Ever since the young man had left Oxford he had taken him by the hand and introduced him to several people of fashion who were very good friends for Kit to know.

“Everything depends upon a good beginning,” said his uncle whilst making his nephew the recipient of these favours. “I have known many men of family and fortune fail simply because they started badly and refused to avail themselves of the opportunities offered them. To a man like you, who has to make his way in the world, society should not be merely an amusement, but a profession. It is astonishing, if you look upon friendship in its proper light, what a very desirable means to an end it is. In introducing you to my friends I have borne this in mind, and I flatter myself, Kit, that all to whom *I* have introduced you are people worth cultivating. It is for you to improve your acquaintance with them, and if you only act with a little diplomacy in humouring men’s weaknesses and a little tact in ministering to women’s vanities, who knows what’s in store for you? And I can

tell you that people are taking to you ; you have made for yourself an excellent character. They all say you are a young man of such high principle and that kind of thing, that it is quite a pleasure for them to receive you. It was only yesterday that I was talking about you to Lady McGrabbe (you know her husband is in the Cabinet and I should like him to be useful to you), and she said she wanted you to be acquainted with her son, who is a shocking *mauvais sujet*, as she had heard so much in your favour and she thought you might be able to reform him. I will introduce you to her and you must play your cards well ; talk to her about china, homœopathy, and ritualism, that's all she cares for. That rude fellow Danvers told her that her religion was like her homœopathy — she thought a little went a long way and tried to make that little as palatable as possible. Not bad, though, was it ? but she's an awful old hypocrite. However, we are excellent friends ! Oh, yes, it is a great thing your having such an established reputation—it ought to stand you in good stead. I should like to

see you marry a rich wife, Kit. Ah! here we are at the club. I'll go in and see if there's a chance of pushing your name forward; we decide upon our selected members to-day."

Young Mowbray paid very little attention to what the Colonel called his "views of life," but he had no objection to make the most of the introductions which, thanks to his uncle, fell to his lot. As the season advanced he took very kindly to the numerous invitations that crossed his path, and did all in his power, by enjoying himself on every occasion, to atone for the previous monasticism of his University days. I doubt whether there is any time when the charms of London appear more festive and alluring than they do to the youth who has just entered the portals of life, and in whom ambition has not yet begun to sow the seeds of discontent. Such a period comes to us all, but its pleasures, alas! are too fleeting. The novelty soon wears off, whilst the distinction accorded to merit speedily stimulates our energies to enter the race for success, and then the tranquillity of enjoyment is lost in

work, heartburnings, and perhaps the disappointment created by failure. Such was not now the case, however, with Kit. He had had enough of "grinding" in the past, and thought that a little resting on the laurels he had gained would be far from disagreeable. Gay, good-looking, and agreeable, the world smiled upon him, and the fascinations of the siren made him bear with considerable indifference, for the present, all discussions and fears as to his future prospects. "Something would turn up—his uncle had interest, and it would be all right in the end," he said, carelessly, and dismissed the matter summarily from his mind. *Ah, on est bien à vingt ans !* And why should he bother himself about the future, or deem that it would be aught than bright and happy? Let him view the sunny side of life and tinge its pleasures and pursuits with the rosiest *couleur de rose* as long as he can. Time enough when grief has broken him, experience deceived him, to despond and despair of success. What does he know, gazing upon life from the threshold, of the world's neglect, the pangs of love

despised, the whips and scorns of time, or that bitterest of all ills, the insolence of office? Nought. Before him is life—not the struggling existence of the anxious man, nor the vegetation of the jaded voluptuary—but *life*, teeming with ever fresh excitements, with every brilliant castle in the air an approaching reality, every man a friend, every woman a beauty, nay, the very fact of existence itself a sense of exquisite happiness. Why should he then bother himself? His father, an eminent clergyman, stands high in the opinion of his order, he has a refined and comfortable home, a tolerable allowance, and there is no immediate necessity for his going into harness. Why worry himself? Of course he will work eventually, will be obliged to work, but then he must know what career he is to enter upon—at present there is no career. It is no use going to the Bar and slaving away for nothing. He will wait patiently for something to turn up, and in the meanwhile enjoy himself. Such are his ideas, and he certainly puts them into practice.

The Canon certainly did not approve of this course of idleness. He felt that it was man's duty to work, and where that duty was omitted mischief not infrequently followed. But what career could he advise Kit to take up? The only profession in which he had any interest was his own, and that, he was very rightly of opinion, should be only entered by men who feel a special calling. Kit had told him that this special calling was lacking so far as he was concerned, and the Canon, though much disappointed at the confession, never broached the subject again: the Church was, as he had said, a mission—not a profession. But then what was a young man to do who had his living to get in these days? Often and often he mentioned the subject to Kit and to friends of his own who he thought might be influential, but nothing came of these conversations. The Canon in matters of mundane policy was shrinking and unpractical. He wanted that tact and *savoir faire*, which are so necessary in asking for personal favours. The fact of begging for something for his own son intimidated him

and made him shy and sensitive, and far from a useful advocate. Had he been asked to use his interest to obtain a living for an aged curate, or funds for some deserving object, or for an appointment for anybody else he would have been as bold and pushing as the most brazen of place-hunters. But to ask for his son was very different. It was repellent to him.

Like Kit, he built great hopes upon the Colonel's influence. The clergyman had a great respect for his brother, as a practical man of business, and relied upon his advice and actions wherever mundane matters were concerned implicitly. He felt that if any one could be instrumental in giving Kit a helping hand along the road of life, it was the lad's uncle. The Colonel was rich, powerfully connected, and wanted none of the interest he possessed to advance his own children. He grumbled occasionally about the future in store for his own kith and kin, for he rather liked grumbling; but all the while he knew he did it without occasion. The estate of Yllton-Tyrell would bear all the burdens to be cast upon it. Aware of

the importance of a proper provision in life for Kit he was really anxious to see him settled. He had thrown a little cold water upon the ardent hopes of his brother and nephew, for he was one of those men who do not like to let people expect more than it was in his power to perform. He was fully conscious of the difficulties in the way of obtaining anything like an appointment worth accepting, and he felt a little nervous when he saw how strongly his brother clung to him ; but at the same time he hoped to be successful in the end. Still he thought it just as well that Kit's future should not be regarded as a certainty, simply because the directing of it had been entrusted to his uncle.

It was a few days after the conversation between the brothers, recorded in the last chapter, that Mrs. Mowbray came into her son's room just as he was going out.

"Kit, dear," said she, "are you engaged for this evening?"

"Yes, I'm going to dine with some men at the Club ; but why, *madre mia*?"

"Oh, only that I should have been so glad

had you been disengaged," replied Mrs. Mowbray, "because I have a *conversazione* to-night—the Bishop of Bantam is coming—and I should have been glad if you could have come in and heard him."

"Well, I'll return as soon after dinner as I can and show myself—but you never told me you had a 'talkee-talkee' on to-night?"

"No, my dear Kit," said his mother, kissing him affectionately, "because you always look upon such meetings as a bore, and I do not wish to make you do penance more than I can help; but I am sure it will please your father to introduce you to the Bishop." Mrs. Mowbray, like many mothers who know how to give good advice to others, spoilt her son terribly.

"Then if it will please you both," said Kit, returning his mother's salute, "you may rely upon my appearance. *Au revoir.*"



CHAPTER V.

MRS. MOWBRAY'S "AT HOME."

HAS it ever been the lot of any man who reads these pages to find amid the various invitations which, during the whirl of a London season, crowd his tables and embellish his looking-glass, a card framed somewhat after this fashion?—

MRS. HUBERT MOWBRAY

REQUESTS THE PLEASURE OF

_____ 's Company,

*At a Conversazione on Tuesday, the 24th
of May.*

The Bishop of Bantam will give some account of the Mission Work in Cochin China. Various other Gentlemen will take part in the proceedings.

THE RECTORY, ETHELBURGA TERRACE. EIGHT O' CLOCK.

And having obeyed the invitation, what

are his subsequent impressions? Does he regard the gathering as a great social power for the dissemination of much that is good, and consider its introduction into the hospitalities of the religious world a matter for congratulation to all who wish to see society utilized for some grave and laudable purpose, or does he vote the whole thing a bore?"

Kit, I must own, did not entertain much of a weakness for his mother's assemblies; and though he always made it a duty to be present, generally managed to leave either very early or attend very late. The Colonel was not a little to be blamed for encouraging this feeling in the mind of his nephew, who was by no means a believer in the efficacy of these drawing-room meetings.

"The whole affair," he used to say oracularly, "is a mistake—a disagreeable compromise between an 'at home' and a meeting. If you want to have an 'at home' have an 'at home,' and if you want to have a meeting have a meeting." It was, therefore, not very often that he conducted Lady Selina to the conversaziones of Mrs. Mowbray; and

when he did he generally managed to sit or stand near Kit, and quiz the celebrities grouped about the room—not in the best taste, considering that he was under his brother's roof, and ridiculing to the son of the house the visitors of his father.

“This ostentatious piety, my dear boy,” he would say, “is all hypocrisy. Look at Bullion, the banker, there, what does he care for the mission interest, or for the matter of that, for any interest unless derived from capital? But he knows that the profession of religion with him means business, and that there are many people who only care to bank with a man who is supposed to be as safe in this world as he is for the next, so of course he is quite right from his point of view in coming to these kind of parties (the Colonel always called these meetings parties, much to Mrs. Mowbray's dislike), especially when you think how much of his deposits are made up by charitable contributions. And pray what does Kaggmagg the lawyer *really* care for Cochin China? How respectable he looks there with his bald head and gold spectacles, and yet he knows as much

of sharp practice, they tell me, as any man ! If he were not alive to the fact that all this kind of thing means clients, would he attend here ? Not he ! A pious man *and* a lawyer, eh ! what a combination, Kit ! Such a union ought to be able to do anything ! Oh, don't tell me," continued he, testily, "that I am mistaken" (for Kit had contested this point); "men never affect extreme piety for nothing. A proper sense of religion, such as you and I have, every one should possess ; but your poor father carries it too far, and after he has been so deceived too, it's astonishing ! Besides, see how all this kind of thing encourages hypocrisy and a false moral system altogether. Look at those young women dressed up as if they were at a ball ! Wouldn't they rather be whirling about with a young man by their side instead of being here, glum and silent, and picking their fans to pieces ? And why are they here ? Because they value the spiritual condition of the Cochin Chinese ? Not a bit of it. But because their mothers hope to struggle into society through the portals of these conversaziones, or because it suits the mun-

dane interests of their papas that they should be seen here and at similar places, or for some such reason. Why, there's Miss Bayteese looking as if her whole soul were wrapped up in the conversation of that yellow visaged missionary, and where do you think I saw her last night? Why, at the French play, and the comedy was not over-decent either if the truth were known. And then look at those young men crowding round the doorway, do they come to your mother's because they want to hear about the Cochin Chinese? You know they don't, and you know that the moment the talking begins they'll sneak downstairs and smoke in the Square, and not return till supper time. Wouldn't it be better for them if they were at their clubs or at parties they really liked? Of course it would, but then they can't refuse; perhaps, like Kagmagg, all their prosperity lies in pandering to the views and wishes of these kind of people. And so I say the turning of society into a meeting-house is a bad thing and fosters false appearances, and I hate false appearances. Hush! the Bishop is going to take the chair. They

tell me his brother keeps an ironmonger's shop—is it true, think ye?"

Now, whether the Colonel's views were right or wrong—and I hold them to be wrong—they were certainly not entertained by Mrs. Mowbray, for that lady fully believed in the good arising from these *réunions*, and seldom a week passed during the season in which she did not issue cards for what her son called a "talkee-talkee." In the Evangelical world woman occupies a far more prominent position than she does in that of the High Church. In the latter the sacerdotal power of the priest admits little opportunity for woman's *direct* intervention; but in the former the influence of the fair sex is of such weight that the parson who opposed it would indeed be unwise. The Ritualist depends upon his interpretation of the Eucharist for much of his influence; the Evangelical on the support and sympathy of the women.

Now there were few ladies who possessed more influence amongst the Low Church party than Mrs. Mowbray. She had written various works for children, a pamphlet on

Charity Organization, and the life of an eminent Evangelical banker, all of which contributions to our literature had an immense sale. She was on the committee of three Ladies' Auxiliary Mission Societies, and much of her time was spent in engaging missionaries, in drawing up reports, and in collecting funds. Hardly a district secretary of any of the great Low Church societies was unacquainted with Mrs. Mowbray. Her name was as well known as the Canon's. She was untiring in her attendance at Ladies' Committees of the different metropolitan hospitals and convalescent homes. She employed a whole staff of scripture-readers; she was always recommending destitute cases to her friends; the settees in her drawing-rooms were always crowded with little baskets full of articles made by the halt, the blind, and the lame, which she tried to sell to her guests or morning callers. Visiting Mrs. Mowbray, I am bound to say, is somewhat of an expensive duty. Her name figured at every religious fancy bazaar; and what with superintending institutions for deaconesses, children's schools, refuges,

homes, and the like, it was a wonder she had any time to devote to her household duties.

But Mrs. Mowbray was not one of those women who attend to religious works to the exclusion of home affairs. The butcher who supplied the rectory knew that every ounce of meat was weighed in the presence of Mrs. Mowbray, and woe be to him if in his account its weight was over estimated. The laundry company knew better than to make any mistakes in the weekly wash, or to indulge in a few casual appropriations of collars and handkerchiefs. All the tradesmen who called daily for orders were very careful not to hang about the area gate and gossip and flirt with the rector's servants. Mrs. Mowbray kept her eyes about her, and, generally supervised matters herself, leaving little, save obedience to her orders, to domestics. It was woe to the butler if his cellar book was incorrect, woe to the cook if she had been lavish in her culinary proceedings ("waste" Mrs. Mowbray abominated); woe to the servants generally if they broke anything, drank their beer too freely, were

over keen as regards perquisites, or stayed out late on a Sunday evening, for then their mistress came down upon them with that severity for which she was somewhat noted. Not that the rector's wife was hard to please, but she had been brought up to learn the value of money, and accordingly determined to get money's worth in all her transactions. She had a great idea of servants doing their duty, and believed that that result could only be attained by the most constant and watchful supervision—"looking after them," she called it; *espionage* was what the French maid termed it. But those who served her knew that she was a considerate, fair-dealing mistress, and that if they did their duty to her she would do her duty by them. Still, at the same time, I must own that Mrs. Mowbray was not very popular in the servants' hall. "If it weren't for missus," the rectory servants used to say, "what a jolly place ours would be!" And I have no doubt that if by a "jolly place" they meant one in which they could neglect their work as much as they liked and do pretty well as they pleased, their conclusion was a very

just one. The Canon had about as much idea of looking after people as a volunteer captain at a levée has of humility. You might as well expect an alderman to be a vegetarian as expect the rector of St. Winifrid's to be practical in small matters.

Now whatever opinion may be entertained with regard to Mrs. Mowbray—and there are those who say she is somewhat masculine, and inclined to be fussy and imperious—there cannot be the slightest doubt that she is just the wife for the Canon. Sharp, practical, and energetic, she is the very antithesis of her husband; and had that gentleman married his present spouse somewhat earlier in life he would have been saved much of the extortions of the "True Fold." It is a matter of some difficulty to impose upon Mrs. Hubert Mowbray.

Let me describe her personal appearance as she sits next to the Bishop of Bantam, who is about to open the proceedings of the conversazione. A woman built on somewhat of a large scale, tall, commanding, and, if I may be permitted to use the word, voluptuous in appearance. An olive complexion, very

distinctly marked black eyebrows, beneath which gleam a pair of large Spanish eyes (her mother was of foreign extraction), a nose inclined to be beaky, a large but well-shaped mouth, full of magnificent teeth, and a resolute-looking chin. The forehead is broad and intellectual, and crowned by smooth jet black hair, worn in coils *à la grecque*. Her hands are large, but white and splendidly formed. In the whole Juno-like appearance of Mrs. Mowbray there is something very striking. In the fall of her shoulders and the turn of the head there is an air of command which one seldom associates with the fair sex. Though a woman on a large scale, there is nothing coarse, as is often the case with large women, in the features or figure of the Canon's wife. Even the Colonel, who is not particularly well-disposed towards his sister-in-law, admits that Mrs. Mowbray is an "extremely lady-like person."

Seated behind their mother are the two Miss Mowbrays. Rosa, the eldest, is a handsome brunette, with the eyes of her mother, whilst Georgie is more like Kit,

with light auburn hair, dark blue eyes, and a clear white complexion, save where the hue of health kisses its surface. Both young ladies are dressed in black net, with geraniums in their hair; and standing by their side are the Canon's curates, two young men from Cambridge, who find the frequent hospitalities of the rectory a pleasant change from parish work.

The rooms are thronged with expectant listeners, young and old, grave and gay, awaiting the information about to be imparted to them by his Lordship the Bishop of Bantam. But before that event arrives a few preliminaries have to be arranged. The Canon opens the proceedings by prayer; then a hymn is sung; then a brief financial report is read; then an honorary secretary quotes some extracts from letters from people interested in the Cochin China mission; then another honorary secretary reads passages from letters from people actually engaged in the work in Cochin China; then one or two gentlemen make a few remarks upon the special features of the work, and then at last the Bishop rises on his legs and lets flow a

speech, which satisfies, let us hope, his auditors and encourages his supporters.

According to his promise, Kit returned home as soon as he conveniently could. But though, like a dutiful son, he shunned the fascinations of the club smoking-room, and refused to be beguiled into billiards, it was somewhat late when he made his appearance at the rectory. Still he was in excellent time to be introduced to the Bishop, for the *conversazione* was not yet over; but as he did not wish his entrance to interrupt the speaking that was still going on, he hung about the door-way of the rooms in company with several other young men, who, like Kit, voted these meetings rather a bore, and thought that distance lent enchantment to the view.

"I say, Kit," whispered a young man named Travers, the son of a pious merchant—who attended these *réunions* "merely to please his people, don't you know?"—"who is that pretty girl next that tall woman in black velvet?—there she is, playing with her fan."

Kit looked in the direction pointed out to

him, and to his astonishment recognised his fair unknown whom he had met on the day of the boat-race in Lord Salamis' carriage. More beautiful than ever she now appeared to him—her pale beauty slightly flushed with the heat of the rooms, her large dark eyes gazing somewhat critically on the speaker, her graceful figure set off by a toilette as simple as it was perfect, her face and attitude the very study for an artist, the very pose for a sculptor.

"I don't know who she is," replied Kit; "I saw her at the boat-race a few days ago with Lord Salamis, and pointed out to them a good place by the river. She is certainly a beautiful girl. I'll ask my mother about her as soon as all this talk is over."

"Do, and get me an introduction, old man," said Travers. "I'll make use of it at supper-time. I should like to take her down."

"And I should like to take *you* down," replied Kit, laughing, "so you may fish for an introduction elsewhere!"

At last the Bishop, amid a well-bred hum of applause, resumed his seat; a hymn was

then sung, and an episcopal benediction brought the conversazione to an end.

Kit entered the room, approached his mother, was introduced to the Bishop of Bantam, and after exchanging a few remarks with his lordship, said to Mrs. Mowbray—

“I say, mother, who is that pretty girl over there in white, with a blue bow in her hair, talking to a tall lady in black? There, she is looking at us now!”

“Oh! that is a Miss Barillon, one of the Limeshire Barillons, I believe. The tall lady with her is her aunt, a Miss Lysaght, whom I met at the Moravian Mission School meeting. A very charming woman! She said she wished to hear the Bishop of Bantam to-night, so I sent her a card, and she brought her niece with her. A pretty girl, that Miss Barillon, I think.”

“Pretty!” cried Kit, “she has a face that would have made Greuze go mad with envy! Please introduce me.”

Mrs. Mowbray complied with her son's request, and, threading her way through the chattering crowd, approached Miss Lysaght and her niece, and formally introduced Kit.

"I think I have had the pleasure of seeing you before," began he, bowing to Miss Barillon. "I hope you did not regret my having recommended you to see the boat-race from the spot I pointed out to you—but perhaps you have forgotten."

"Oh, of course—I remember now!" replied Miss Barillon, with an air of assumed reflection—she had recognised him the moment he entered the room. "It was you who recommended us to that place by the river-side? Oh! we saw charmingly! What a capital race it was! How I wish we had been at Mortlake to see the end of it! But what terrible work it must have been for you, Mr. Mowbray! I have read in the papers that all this boat-racing is very dangerous."

"I have no wish to disparage the Fourth Estate, but it does not do to believe everything you read in the papers, Miss Barillon. When medical men with crotchety opinions and self-constituted critics write about what they don't know, they are apt to make exaggerated sentiments."

The Canon here came up to take Miss

Lysaght down to supper, and his son quietly occupied the seat vacated.

"Your name is quite familiar to me," said he, beginning the conversation. "I knew a Barillon at Merton who had to leave before taking his degree on account of his health;—is he any relation of yours?"

"Oh! did you know Arthur?" said Miss Barillon, with that interest and animation which the striking of a mutual chord between strangers always awakens; "he is my brother. Poor fellow, he is still delicate, and always obliged to winter abroad. I am so glad you know him!"

"I cannot say I knew him very well, for he was senior to me at Oxford, but still we had several friends in common. Is he in town now?"

"Yes; I have been with him all this afternoon; and what do you think we have been doing? I am sure you will never be able to guess."

"I think I can guess," said Kit, in a melancholy voice; "I have two sisters myself. What does a sister do when ac-

accompanied by her brother but take him shopping?"

"Shopping!" said Miss Barillon, indignantly; "as if I would ever ask you to guess so humdrum an occupation."

"It is rather humdrum, isn't it?" echoed Kit. "I have been out all this afternoon with Lady McGrabbe, you know, the wife of the minister, and it was not gay. We went into Lapworth's, and turned over every carpet in the place; then we went to Cadbury's, and tasted every ch  ese from Gruy  re to Gorgonzola; then we compared the prices at Fortnum and Mason's with the Co-operative Stores, and picked away at chocolates for nothing; then we went to Albemarle Street and criticised the china, and my lady broke a cup, for which she didn't offer to pay; then we looked at jewels at Emanuel's, and some plate at Garrard's, and then we ended our day's work by buying a shilling's worth of braid at Redmayne's--the maximum of trouble with the minimum of expenditure, I rather flatter myself! But you say you were not shopping, Miss Barillon?"

"Strange as it may appear to you, Mr. Mowbray," said Miss Barillon, smiling, "I was not shopping. Guess again."

"What you were doing this afternoon?" repeated Kit, meditatively. "Having a succession of afternoon teas?"

"No, certainly not!"

"Taking lessons in cookery?"

"No."

"You needn't be offended—it is quite as fashionable as learning to model or illuminate."

"I am not offended, but I told you you wouldn't be able to guess."

"Then I must give it up. Was it hearing the fiddling at the Albert Hall?"

"No."

"Seeing pigeon-killing at Hurlingham?"

"I am not so cruel as that, I hope."

"Well then I give it up. I am a bad hand at guessing."

"Have you ever been at Stangate?"

"It sounds like a seaside place. No, I never was there," replied Kit.

"It is not a seaside place, but something very the contrary. I mean Stangate close

to Westminster, the most squalid and miserable district in the whole of London, I should think, said Miss Barillon."

"And pray what were you doing there?" said Kit. "You are not a deaconess, are you?"

"No. But my brother, whom you know, with two of his friends, is trying to effect some improvement in the condition of the lower classes, and has settled down at Stan-gate, where he is fitting up a working man's club and a co-operative store, and all that kind of thing? I have been making my first visit of inspection this afternoon."

"Oh yes, I remember now!" said Kit, smiling, "your brother's rooms at Merton used to be always like those of a President of the Poor Law Board, full of blue books, population returns, prisons' reports, and all that kind of literature. So he has taken to pauperism in real earnest, has he?"

"Yes; and just before you were introduced to me I was asking your sister, when I heard that she had a brother, whether she thought you would care to co-operate with

him. I am afraid I make myself a great bore, but Arthur has asked me to do my best in getting him assistance, so I try to enlist every one whom I think likely to suit."

"I am sure he could not have employed a better recruiting officer," said Kit.

"Oh, no pretty speeches! Miss Mowbray is going to accompany my aunt and me tomorrow to see my brother's lecture-room, which is just open. We are going to drive down at eleven. Will you come? You might be tempted to become an amateur philanthropist yourself, you know."

"Oh, I shall be very glad I am sure!" said Kit.

"Your brother has consented to come with us," said Miss Barillon to Rosa Mowbray, who had just approached them.

"I am delighted to hear it," replied Rosa, smiling. "Kit, will you take Miss Barillon down to supper?"

"Oh, I have made a great mistake," said Kit, offering his arm gravely. "I hope you will forgive me."

"Why, what have you done?" asked his fair companion, astonished.

"I have made a mistake for which we shall both suffer. We ought to have gone downstairs long before this. You are new to these conversaziones, I am not. Know, then, that it is the custom for all the elderly people to go down together, and then, when they have sufficiently refreshed themselves with pickings from the very best things, the young folks descend, and are supposed to be very grateful to their elders for having finished all the champagne, claret-cup, lobster salad, wings of chicken, and the like, and to be content with Marsala, stale sponge-cake, and the fag-ends of tongue. When you are young, says a great statesman, live with the old; and he ought to have added, especially at one of these conversazione suppers. What can I get you?"

"Some chicken, please! Thanks! No wine."

"And do you take a great interest in the Cochin Chiese?" asked Kit, when he had attended to his fair companion's wants, and

was standing by her side trifling with a ginger biscuit, knowing that when the guests were gone, he would make a capital supper on the spoils of the feast.

"I am afraid I know so little about them," replied Miss Barillon. "They seem to be a very interesting people."

"Very interesting," said Kit. "But you know, though I suppose I oughtn't to say it, I think drawing-room meetings for such objects are rather a mistake. Here this evening we have been talking about Cochin China, collecting for it and taking up its cause warmly, and yet look at the benighted thousands around us, who are as depraved and destitute as any that Cochin China can show."

"And do you do anything yourself, Mr. Mowbray, to alleviate the ignorance and misery of London?" asked Miss Barillon, her dark eyes resting inquiringly upon him.

"Well—yes—no—not exactly. Why?" said Kit.

"Do you wish to know why?"

"Yes."

"Well, you must not be offended, but I

always remark that those who object to foreign missions on the principle that charity begins at home seldom exert themselves to do much good at home. I think you will find that all who support charitable objects abroad are among the very first to maintain such objects at home."

"Well, perhaps so," said Kit, smiling. "I never argue with a lady: argument is the death of conversation. Who knows but your brother may make me a great philanthropist? and then you will not be able to reproach me with doing nothing at home."

"I did not reproach you," said Miss Barillon, quietly. "Thanks, nothing more; could you get me a glass of water?"

Just as Kit had complied with her request he saw his mother beckoning to him, and as Travers was near him, he introduced him to Miss Barillon, and then hurried off to his mother, who wanted him to supervise some further details in the wine department.

"Do you often come to these kind of places?" asked Travers, putting down Miss Barillon's tumbler on the buffet.

"Very seldom; we know so few people who give them."

"Then you don't know any of the celebrities here? No! then I will point them out to you. That tall elderly lady with yellow in her cap is Miss Ambrose, who has travelled all over Asia Minor, and is so mad about Mohammedan converts that it is a pity she ever returned home again. That little fat man is the great lecturer on Romanism; he goes about the country with awful diagrams of the horrors of convents; anything connected with the Scarlet Woman makes him as furious as the waving of a red flag does a mad bull. By his side is the editor of the "Lantern," who illuminates the High Church Bishops with a bitter attack twice a week. That short stout lady is Mrs. Wagquill, the authoress, whose special mission it is to convert young men; her enemies say that her interest in their fate has only been awakened by her daughters still remaining unmarried. Talking to her is Miss Dobbs, an Irish lady, who passes her time in lecturing and calling upon the poor; they call her the Visitation

of the Sick and Needy. That tall haughty-looking man is Lord Tracegrave; yes, of course you know him! Do you see that little fat man talking to Canon Mowbray and gracefully shedding his food over the people near him? he is Professor Hüffler the great writer on prophecy. Yon portly gentleman leaning against the doorway is the learned Dr. Hodson, who knows every language under the sun, and to show his contempt for his own, drops every "h" that it possesses. That tall beautiful girl is a nurse who keeps an hospital at her own expense; there's many a man who would be only too glad to change places with that hospital. She has refused as many offers as she has had patients, they say. If you want to look at the speculative mind from a religious point of view take a good gaze at Lord Sawder. Yes, that little thin man with a black stock and no collar, he is buying up all the land round Jerusalem, for he expects the Jews soon to be restored to their own country, and hopes to make a good thing of it. See how earnestly he is talking to Hüffler; fancy a man looking upon

prophecy from a Stock Exchange view! Awful, isn't it! That illustrious individual almost opposite you is of course, as you can see from the symptoms, a Member of Parliament. There's Du Menteur, the great traveller, who, they say, writes his travels in the British Museum. Ah, there's a lady making signs to you." And Mr. Travers, who could rattle on for ever, paused.

"Oh, thanks, that is my aunt. I must be going, I suppose."

Just then Kit rejoined her.

"I am commanded by Miss Lysaght to say that she is waiting for you. Let me see you to your carriage." And with a bow to Mr. Travers, Miss Barillon, followed by Kit, made a passage through the crowd.

As the young man saw both aunt and niece carefully ensconced in their brougham, Miss Barillon bent forward from her nest of wraps and said—

"Remember your promise, Mr. Mowbray—to-morrow at eleven. Good night!"



CHAPTER VI.

A NEW CAREER.

ACCORDING to his promise, Kit set out the next morning with Miss Barillon and his sister, for the sphere of the young philanthropist's labours. As the brougham drove up to a newly done up building which had originally been a wax-work exhibition, it was met at the door by a tall slightly built young man.

"Oh, Arthur!" said Miss Barillon, "I have brought some friends who want to look at your arrangements."

"I am sure I shall be happy to show them everything in my power," said the young man, and Kit and his sister were introduced.

"Oh, of course I know you, Mowbray; we have met before at Oxford." And Barillon shook Kit warmly by the hand.

"I hope Mr. Mowbray will be one of your most efficient helpers. I have done my best to make him a recruit," said Miss Barillon, smiling and ascending the steps which led into the building with Rosa Mowbray.

"I am sure I shall be only too glad if you do join us, Mowbray. Yes, this is the lecture-room."

They had entered a long room whose whitewashed walls were covered with maps, pictures from scenes of English history and leaflets of advice in all subjects, from cookery to political economy. A goodly array of forms covered the floor.

"You would perhaps hardly believe it," said Barillon, "but last night I gave a lecture on Wordsworth, interspersing my remarks with copious quotations, and the room was crowded; afterwards we had a general discussion on the subject, and it was surprising how ready and much to the point were the observations of my pauper audience. The more I go about here, the more I see that if you suggest to the poor good healthy topics, they will take an interest in them. Before another three months I hope to see

my lecture-room cut out the penny gaffs about us."

"I hope you are not too sanguine, Arthur," said Miss Barillon.

"Better be sanguine than desponding, wherever pauperism is concerned," said Miss Mowbray, who was one of the leading district visitors at St. Winifrid's. "Don't you find yourself, Mr. Barillon, coming frequently into collision with the parish authorities? As for me, I can hardly keep my temper when I have anything to do with our parish doctor; as for his prescriptions, I believe the only two drugs he knows of are rhubarb and quassia!"

"Oh!" laughed Barillon, "I am always in a perpetual state of hot-water; what with rowing up the Board of Guardians, threatening to expose the inspectors of nuisances, arguing with the medical officer, warring with extortionate landlords and the petty tradesmen, and fighting generally with the whole system of the Poor Laws, my time is pretty well occupied, I can assure you. But matters are becoming much improved; it is a wholesome thing for a few gentlemen to

come down here and see that the poor are treated as they deserve to be."

"It's rather fun, I should think," said Kit; "but don't you want a lot of money to carry on this charity work?"

"Not so much as you would suppose. In the first place it all depends upon what you call charity," said Barillon, laughing. "Charity *per se* is an utter mistake. Many people imagine that all that is required to relieve destitution is the giving of alms, and so the administration of charity is looked upon as one of the simplest things out, when the contrary is the case. Almsgiving as practised by certain emotional young ladies, or unpractised young men, is a matter certainly of no great difficulty. But poverty is so intimately connected with vice and culpable improvidence that grants of money often only aggravate the evil instead of diminishing it."

"What course do you pursue then?" asked Miss Mowbray.

"Well, my idea of charity is that it should be a system combining justice and discretion together with that rule of action which

consists in making the recipient help himself rather than in being directly assisted. In fact, the plain truth is that the poor stand quite as much in need of your advice and the information your superior brains can give them as they do of your money. When I give any of the poor on my list money, I look upon it as a means to an end, but not, as many people do, as the end itself."

They had now reached the end of the room, and Barillon opening a door on the left-hand side, the party entered a small reading-room where the tables were covered with newspapers, a few books, and chess and backgammon boards.

"This is what is grandly called the club, where the men come in the evening and read, and also, as you can perceive by the atmosphere, smoke."

"Phew! horrid!" said Miss Barillon. "And to think, Miss Mowbray, that it is here I am to come with my aunt every Thursday to give instruction to a sewing class. You might let us have the lecture-room, Arthur?"

“Impossible! for that’s the day I use it for my co-operative stores: it’s war to the knife between me and the petty tradesmen down here, I can tell you!” said Barillon, laughing.

And then they inspected the kitchen, where cooking lessons were given; the store closets, which contained the goods sold to the poor at wholesale prices; the sewing room, in which girls intended for dressmakers were taught the use of sewing machines; Barillon’s study, where the most tantalizing emigration offers were exhibited; and the other apartments which the industry of the young man had been the means of opening, observations being freely given the while on all sides.

When this had been done the philanthropic cicerone turned to his sister and said—

“By the way, Muriel, I wish you and Miss Mowbray would be good enough to pass your opinion upon some linen that has been offered to me at a sacrifice. You will find it in the store closet at the end of that room. Meanwhile I will take Mowbray

round my district and show him the wiles and woes, and the miseries and mysteries of a section of London pauperism. We shall meet in another hour. Come along, Mowbray."

Whatever be the heartlessness of the latter part of this nineteenth century, against which certain satirists love to rail, it is impossible to impugn the interest now taken in all questions which relate to pauperism, and especially to London pauperism. Happily we have at last learnt that the first of all charities is the charity which begins at home, and that those of our race and language who are in sickness, in want, or in ignorance have the chief claims upon our pockets and energies. No cynic can therefore throw the stone at us, as he might have done some few years ago, by saying that we busy ourselves in the relief of people whom we do not know, whose country we have never heard of, and whose names we very often cannot pronounce, whilst we permit those of our own flesh and blood to perish by destitution, and to be brutalized by ignorance. Such charges can no longer be laid

at our door. Much of this interest is, of course, in a community like ours, theoretical. There are many men who write about the poor, legislate for the poor, and who possess an inexhaustible number of theories relating to the extinction of pauperism, who in all probability never entered a poor man's cottage or saw the inside of a workhouse. But, on the other hand, there are others who, working with clergy of all denominations, lay agents, and amateur almoners, try to discover by practical experience the exact state of our metropolitan pauperism, and do all in their power to mitigate its sufferings and suppress its growth, and of these pioneers and explorers not a few are drawn from the ranks of this generation. The number of young men (many of them of birth and fortune) who within the last few years—especially since the close of the Crimean war—have found themselves amongst the sick and the destitute is an agreeable proof that selfishness, frivolity, and dissipation are not so entirely the characteristics of the present day as some would wish us to believe.

Amongst these young men the name of Arthur Barillon occupied a prominent position. He had begun life after a brief career at the University, by entering a cavalry regiment; but after a couple of years' soldiering, a fortune having been left him, he sold out, and retired for awhile into private life. Idleness, however, being unsuited to his active character, he harked back to a subject he had always been fond of, and took to studying the question of pauperism in all its branches. The result of this study had for its end to turn him into an amateur philanthropist and worker among the poor. In appearance Barillon was, to a certain extent, something like his sister. He had the same pale complexion, the same dark eyes, the same coloured hair, the same dignity in his air and manner; but the energy expressed in the lines round the resolute mouth, the intellect which gleamed in his eyes, the thought that hung upon his massive brow, were all wanting in the soft feminine face of his sister.

Escorted by his new friend, Kit trudged

over the parish. He explored the most hideous network of back streets, courts, and alleys; he looked in at a couple of ragged schools, and saw the children at their lessons; he went over the night refuge, and paid a visit to that hell of the Poor Law system, a London workhouse. He called upon a few lay agents and scripture readers, and listened to details; he entered the miserable houses of several of the paupers on Barillon's list, and saw for himself what civilization means among our lower classes. To Kit it was a visit full of interest. It was the first moment in his life that he had ever actually been face to face with suffering. He had heard much of the miseries of our lower classes, but he believed such accounts were exaggerated, and had no idea that their condition was as deplorable as he found it. It was now that life appeared to him real and earnest, and he saw clearly how arduous was the task which religion and philanthropy daily undertake.

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked Barillon, as the two were returning to rejoin the ladies.

"I should like to take a bath," said Kit, shuddering.

Barillon laughed.

"It's awful," said Kit. "I had no idea such a state of things could be permitted in a civilized country. Fancy all this misery within a shilling cab fare of the most royal wealth! I feel as if I could never spend a sou upon my little selfishnesses again. Your sister says you want aid; I shall be glad to give you my personal help if you think it of any use."

"Thanks, my dear fellow—many thanks! I shall welcome you amongst us—when I say us, there are four other men—most gladly. I find we belong to the same club. Dine with me to-night and let us talk it over?"

"With pleasure. Who are the four men?"

"Oh, I think you know some of them. Do you remember Sinclair of Lincoln?"

"The man who was asked who was Joab, and replied 'Joab is my washpot,' and got ploughed in consequence?"

"The same—finding that divinity was

not his forte, he abandoned his idea of going into the Church, and is now in the Coldstreams. Then there's Scrope, a Cambridge man, who is something or other on the Board of Conventions, a splendid worker, but too much of an advanced Ritualist for my taste; still he's a very good fellow. Then there are two other men, Jones and Vernon, who are very good, but who are always starting new theories which tend somewhat to paralyse action. Here we are, and I see the ladies are waiting for us."

Between Kit and Arthur Barillon a friendship soon sprang up. The two young men were different in their dispositions, but such difference generally tends to bind the ties of intimacy all the closer. And it did so in this instance. To Kit the earnestness of Barillon, his firmness of character, and his quiet geniality were full of charm. He had such an absence of humbug that no one could mistake him for other than he was—an honest, straightforward, high-minded man. Kit always felt the better after a day's companionship with him, and

indeed since their introduction, many days seldom passed without the two friends meeting, whilst Barillon in his turn reciprocated to the full the sentiments of Kit.

"You and Mr. Barillon seem to be quite inseparables," said the Canon to his son, some three weeks after this first visit to Stangate, as the family were sitting down to dinner.

"He's a very good fellow ; he and Scrope are about the two best men I have met with for a long time," said Kit, taking his soup. "By the way, mother, I wish you would tell the cook only to make clear soup. This thick stuff is fatal to any man with moustaches."

"Who is this Mr. Scrope—it is the first time I have heard you mention his name?" asked Rosa Mowbray.

"Oh, he's a man high up in some Government office or other. A very good fellow. I should like to ask him to dinner," said Kit, turning to his mother ; "ask him and Barillon together."

"My dear boy, ask whom you like," said the Canon, freely watering his sherry in

a tumbler. "Any friend of yours is welcome at our table."

"Only he must not complain of the soup," said Georgina.

"Would you like us to ask Miss Barillon as well, Kit?" said Rosa, archly.

"Well, yes—she plays beautifully," replied Kit, nonchalantly. "I must say I like good music after dinner."

"That is as much as to say we give you bad music," said Georgina. "I vote, Rosa, we never play his accompaniments again till he apologizes. But I forgive you, Kit; we all know that Miss Barillon has made a deep impression on your susceptible heart. I wonder what kind of sister-in-law she will make."

"What nonsense you talk, Gina!" said Kit, rather angrily.

"I should hope that Kit would not think of matrimony till he is settled in some profession," said the Canon, quietly.

"Who is talking of matrimony, I should like to know?" laughed his son. "It's awfully hard that a man can't say 'How d'ye do?' to a young lady, without his sisters

jumping to the conclusion that an engagement is going to take place."

"Oh, is that all you say to Miss Barillon?" replied Georgina, sarcastically. "You must be very fond of saying it then. I never knew that 'How d'ye do?' meant so much, and took such a long time to express before. You ought to know her answer to that inquiry by this time, Master Kit."

"I know this, that you are a very impertinent young woman, and that if you don't behave yourself I shall have to speak to Captain Gordon about you." Captain Gordon was supposed to be rather sweet upon Georgina, and that young lady was said to be not wholly indifferent to such sweetness. She flushed therefore slightly and remained silent.

There was some truth, however, in the quizzing of Kit's sisters. The society of Miss Barillon had certainly exercised a kind of spell over my hero of late. He took an interest in everything she liked, was most attentive in executing the slightest of her behests, and whenever he met her at dinner

or dance, generally managed to gravitate towards her. I am not saying anything against Kit's friendship for Arthur Barillon, I believe it was honest and sincere, but we all know how fond a man is of the brother of the girl he secretly affects, so perhaps some such feeling had a little to do with Kit's desire for a closer intimacy with the philanthropist.

I am also not wishing to hint that Kit had ought than a genuine interest in the welfare of the poor at Stangate, but he generally managed to pay his visits on the very days that Miss Barillon, accompanied by her aunt, Miss Lysaght, had herself chosen. Now Kit's special work had been to assist Scrope in beating about for young lads willing to emigrate, and no one could have been more energetic in his new duties. He walked Scrope off his legs, he insinuated himself into the good graces of mothers with a tact which the excellent Scrope envied; and he was so successful in his mission that his friend hinted that there would soon not be an able-bodied lad in Stangate. But when Miss Barillon had elected to go on

Mondays and Thursdays to instruct a juvenile sewing class in the dexterity of the needle, Scrope was in the coolest manner left in the lurch. Though there was not the slightest connexion between Kit's parochial duties and those which Miss Barillon wished to perform, he invariably managed to find that it was absolutely necessary for the proper conduct of "the mission" that he should be near her. Nor did Miss Barillon seem to object; she smiled graciously upon him and utilized his services. He was so accustomed to be regarded as her escort, and looked upon it as so much a matter of course, that whenever Scrope, or Sinclair, or any of the other men monopolized his place during some temporary absence, on his return he was always reinstated by her side as if it were a right. Thus availing himself of every opportunity, he was enabled, at the end of a very short time to make a satisfactory analysis of her character.

"She's just the kind of girl I like," he mused to himself. "There is about her that combination of qualities which cannot but assure her turning out a charming woman."

She's clever and quite educated enough. I hate a disagreeably intellectual woman. And then I'm sure she's good ; the way she takes charge of her father's house proves that. Depend upon it, the best way to judge of a girl's disposition is to view it from the vantage point of home life. I like motherless girls too : there is always more strength of character, and a truer experience of life about them. I wonder what kind of woman was her mother. Miss Lysaght seems a niceish creature ! Yes, there's no doubt but Barillon has a charming sister. How accomplished she is ! plays and sings and paints, and all that kind of thing, without being in the least obtrusive. Then how high spirited ! without being a bit fast or slangy as so many high-spirited girls are ! And what I like about her, is that she's true and high principled without any of that bitter piety or sentimental ritualism one sees so much of nowadays. Then how well she dresses ! Such perfect taste ! I like to see a woman well dressed. I wish Gina dressed better—she makes me quite ashamed of going about with her at times. As for

Miss Barillon she's a kind of girl any man would be proud of going about with. Is there anybody after her I should like to know? I wonder how old she is? Can't be more than twenty, I should say. Her father seems a good sort of old boy; perhaps he'll give me an invitation down to Royston! Ah! that would be nice. I believe 'Gina is right—I am getting spooney! But what bosh! Fancy my spooning anybody! I who am nothing and have got nothing. It's a bore; I wish I had ten thousand a year!"

I am certainly of opinion that Kit was beginning to be touched by Cupid's little irritating arrow, and what might have ensued had not Fate dammed up the current of his love ere it had well nigh left its source I cannot tell. But it now so happened that Miss Lysaght became rather poorly, and the doctors recommended the German waters—Homburg to begin with, and then some of the milder springs. The patient duly attended to the recommendation, and one fine morning Kit was informed by Miss Barillon that in a few days she and her aunt would be off for Germany.

"How long are you going to be away?" asked Kit, rather disconsolately.

"Oh, some months I think. I have never been to Germany. Papa intends to meet us there. He never does care much for London. Have you ever been in Germany?"

"Never. It will be rather a change from the scenery of Stangate," laughed Kit.

"Oh, you must not sneer at Stangate. I like it very much. When I return I shall resume work there, and you must help me again," and she smiled pleasantly on Kit.

"Yes; but what a time to wait!"

"Oh, it will soon pass. I shall make Arthur write to me how you are getting on. You must not neglect him now that I am going away. You tell me that you work—how is it you work? Oh yes! you work like a nigger. I must own I haven't seen it of late, but pray continue that form of African industry. Arthur told me this morning that he was intending to go to Belgium to inspect the prisons there."

"Oh, I think I'll go with him; I have nothing to keep me in town."

"That will be very nice. But can you get away? You are at the Bar, are you not?"

"I am nothing," said Kit, laughing. "Everybody says there's nothing to get, and I am getting it."

"Oh, but that is not right. Every man should have a career. If Arthur were not delicate he would still be in the army. When I see you again I shall hope to hear you are something very great."

"One can't be very great in a few months," laughed Kit.

"Well, on the way to greatness, then," smiled Miss Barillon.

"Why, what does it matter to you what I am?" asked Kit, half in jest.

"Are you fond of shooting?" said Miss Barillon quickly, and as if she had not heard the question.

"Very—why?"

"Oh, papa said he would ask you down to Royston in the autumn. Mr. Scrope and Mr. Sinclair will be coming."

"It's very kind of him. You will have returned by that time, I suppose?" And then they chatted about Germany and Lime-

shire till it was time for that word which has a pang in every syllable to be said.

“Good-bye,” said Kit, rising and extending his hand. “I cannot tell you how sorry I am that our acquaintance, which has been so delightful to me, should so suddenly come to an end.”

“Come to an end?” replied Miss Barillon, smiling and letting her hand remain in his for a moment. “I hope not that! Interrupted, but not ended—that is to say,” said she, giving him an arch *aeillade*, “unless you wish on my return our friendship to come to an end. Good-bye; when next we meet it will be I suppose at Royston? I shall be so happy to show you over the place. Good-bye!” And she turned aside to ring the bell, and Kit withdrew.

For the few days after Miss Barillon’s departure Kit found pauperism and its labours very stale, flat, and unprofitable, and he was thinking seriously of accompanying Arthur in his tour to Belgium when an event occurred which compelled him to withdraw for a season from Stangate and all its attractions.

One morning—the Friday before Whit Monday—as he turned over the various letters, bills, and invitations which usually greeted his appearance at the rector's breakfast-table he recognised the handwriting of his uncle, who had gone down to Yllton-Tyrell for the Whitsuntide recess. He opened the letter and read as follows:—

“Yllton-Tyrell, June 2nd, 18—.

“MY DEAR KIT,—I am thinking that if you could spare time to run down here for a few days it might perhaps advance your interests. Lord Salamis is staying with us, and I should be glad to introduce you to him. He is a great patron of young men whom he fancies, and if he takes a liking to you it may lead to some public appointment. I have spoken to my brother-in-law about you, but he says that there is nothing harder to get than an appointment of some three or four hundred a year (and you could not expect to commence with more); he has two posts of a thousand and fifteen hundred a year to give away, but those can only be conferred on some political

or literary celebrity. It is the social *nobodies* who are the most difficult to provide for. Lord Salamis has, however, far more patronage than the Marquis, and if you play your cards well perhaps some of it may fall into your hands. Any way, I shall introduce you if you come down, and leave it to you to follow up the introduction. With our united love to you all,

“ Believe me, my dear Kit,

“ Your affectionate uncle,

“ WILLIAM SAVERNAKE MOWBRAY.”

When Kit showed this letter to his mother she was fully of opinion that he should make the most of the opportunity and hasten down to Yllton. The Canon also gave the same advice ; and as for young Mowbray, he thought change of air would do him good, and that a few days' rook-shooting would be far from disagreeable. Besides, the visit *might* lead to something, and thus combine pleasure with business. He was, however, not very sanguine in this respect, for he had latterly become somewhat wearied of the stereotyped answers of his father's influential

friends, that "they would make a note of his name," that "they would remember him when an opportunity occurred," and the like; replies which up till now had been barren of any results. Any way, "Yllton Tyrell was never bad fun," as Kit expressed it; and, accordingly, two days after the Colonel's letter, as the train ran into the little yellow-bricked station of Yllton, out of one of its carriages stepped Mowbray. A servant approached him.

"Hallo, Jennings!" said Kit.

"If you please, sir, Miss Mowbray is waiting outside to drive you to the Hall; if you leave your luggage here, sir, I'll take it up in the dog-cart."

"Ah, very well." And Kit descended the staircase of the station.

"How do, Kit—quite well? I am going to call for papa at the Town Hall and take him back to luncheon, so I thought I would come along here and meet you."

"A very proper attention on your part, Lucy," said the young man, shaking hands with a dark, handsome girl, whilst he entered a low phaeton, drawn by a pair of grey

ponies. "I hope, however, you have improved in your driving since the last time I drove with you. I have an unpleasant recollection of cannoning against a hay-cart, and of being pitched into a ditch."

"Oh, you need not be afraid," said the young girl, smiling; "jump in!" Then flicking her ponies with her parasol whip, off they went at a frisky trot.

As they drove up to the Town Hall Miss Mowbray asked her cousin to enter the magistrates' room, where the Colonel was engaged on the interesting business peculiar to petty sessions. Kit did as he was requested, and soon found himself in a small room—very dirty and very fusty, where he saw his uncle enthroned on high, about to administer the law (in England the poor always get the law, whilst the rich very often manage to evade it by small fines or great bail) to a squalid-looking peasant, whose appearance corroborated the charge against him of being drunk and disorderly.

"Now then, Miles," began the Colonel sternly, and after whispering to the clerk of the court, "this is the second time you have

had to appear before me within the last three weeks. What brings you here now, eh?"

"Them pleecemen, yer honour," replied the man, leaning over the dock and pointing to the myrmidons of the law who guarded him on either side.

"Oh, those policemen!" said the Colonel sarcastically. "Of course drink had nothing to do with it?"

"Yes, yer honour, they were both drunk!" said the man, coolly.

The Colonel bit his lips to prevent smiling, and after a few moments' investigation into the charge gave Mr. Miles the option of paying twenty shillings, or fourteen days' imprisonment. This was the last charge on the list, and the Colonel, seeing his nephew, hastened off the bench to greet him, and the pair then proceeded to the pony carriage, and were driven quite safely to the Hall.

Yllton-Tyrell is a large greystone group of buildings, situated on a slight elevation. The house presents no features of distinct architecture, but is rather a conglomeration of Tudor, Elizabethan, and Georgian. The body of the Hall was doubtless Tudor; but

it was so considerably enlarged in the reign of Elizabeth, and renovated throughout in the time of Anne and the first two Georges, that it becomes difficult now to say to what class of architecture it really belongs. There are few roomier mansions, however, or finer properties in the county than this seat of Colonel Mowbray. It stands in the midst of a fine park, amid whose ancient timbers many a deer, both red and fallow, herd in picturesque groups. The slight hill on which the Hall is situated is flagged at its eastern summit by a stone terrace; beyond this terrace is a sloping lawn, whose emerald greenness is relieved by well-kept flower-beds or rare ferns issuing forth from quaint tubs. At the end of the lawn is a broad gravel walk, called, from the cedars that stand on either side of it like lofty sentinels, the Cedar Walk. A ha-ha here separates the walk, which forms a belt round the hill on which the house is built, from the park beyond. In the middle of the park on its south side is a broad lake studded with islands, whose coverts are the home of variegated water-fowl and stately swans.

As the Mowbray party and their guests are at luncheon, I shall take this opportunity of introducing you to them. Marriage is very often the union of diverse dispositions and tastes ; but it never linked two more opposite people in its bonds than the Colonel and his wife. Lady Isabella is a tall, lady-like woman, with white silver hair, large grey eyes, and a prominent nose. She dresses very simply, but always wears the most becoming of caps. Her figure is slight, and it is difficult to believe that she is the mother of three big sons and two daughters. Considering that she is a woman of rank and the sister of the Most Honourable the present Marquis of Tunbridge, one is surprised at her extreme simplicity of manner and the air of almost homeliness that surrounds her. She is utterly devoid of all affectation and modern fine-ladyism, for her ideas of happiness soar beyond the regions of society, and wing their flight to the pleasant country with its endless rural delights and parochial duties. When she weighs London and all its social dissipations in the scale with Yllton-Tyrell and her flower-garden, her

pet animals, the little ivy-clad church, her poor, and the like, she regards the balance as considerably in favour of the country. A kindly woman is the Colonel's wife ; and perhaps it is more by her graceful simplicity of character, her unassuming habits, the gentle ease of her manners, and her air of quiet dignity, without hauteur, that she shows she is the scion of an ancient house and thoroughly the lady. " It's only your parvenu that's always talking of his birth and family," say some of the hostile squires in Bighshire when they compare the Colonel with the Lady Isabella.

Seated next to Lady Isabella is a man who deserves something more than a mere passing notice. There are few men who have not to yield the palm to Lord Salamis. A wit, a poet, a brilliant writer, an effective speaker, it seems as if nature had lavished all her gifts upon him at his birth. Phrenologists say that the upper part of that massive head is the finest monument to intellect they have ever seen. The brow is lofty—unrippled by age—and crowned with long black hair which falls down on

either side the temples in curls à la Byron. Thick but distinctly pencilled eyebrows arch over a pair of black, clearly-cut eyes. To watch those eyes is a study. Watch them when their owner is uninterested or bored—can anything be more cold, more impassive than their gaze? Watch their icy regard when the lips below are giving utterance to some biting sarcasm, some *aqua fortis* retort. Watch them, when lit up by passion, by merriment, or by scorn, and then ask yourself whether you have ever seen eyes that more realize the idea of being the index of the feelings within? What foes those orbs have made—what rage has been created by their air of sarcastic contempt! Where is the impertinent youth who has not been annihilated by their look of sleepy criticism? What shyness has not been encouraged by their kindly regard! What exquisite humour their subtle twinkle displays!

The lower part of the face disappoints you. The nose, though well shaped, is somewhat coarse about the region of the nostrils; the long upper lip detracts from the beauty of the full, bow-like mouth,

whilst the chin is too sharp and angular ; but still the face is one that amid a thousand others would at once attract your attention. In that impassive look, which is the habitual expression of the face, that pale complexion, that air of dignity which invests the tall thin figure—in short in the *tout ensemble* of the man there is something striking, something almost *bizarre*, something very different to the conventional crowd.

That foreign blood flows in his veins is evident to the merest tyro in ethnology. The shape of the eyes, the dark curly hair, the alabaster complexion, speak of other climes than those of England. It is not difficult to see that Greece is the cradle-land of Lord Salamis. His father, a Mr. Argos Istrias, a distant cousin of Count Capo, had quitted his native town of Athens, to reside in London some ten years before the independence of his country was acknowledged by Turkey. Here he founded the well-known banking firm of Istrias and Brown-Davidson, and after a few years' residence in England became a naturalized subject. His wife, like himself, a Greek, had made him

whilst living in Athens the father of an only son—the present Lord Salamis. To let his boy have every advantage that English education and society could offer was the one great object of Mr. Istrias. He sent young Philip (for so he was called) to Harrow, and subsequently to Christ Church, where he distinguished himself more by the originality of his talent than by his power of acquiring knowledge. The genius of Philip Istrias was essentially creative, and only indifferently receptive. He, however, passed through the University with credit to himself; and though there were many men of his year who obtained far greater honours in the schools, yet all felt that the one amongst them who would be the soonest to win a name for himself would be the son of the Greek banker.

Nor were they wrong in their anticipations. At the age of twenty-six Philip Istrias entered Parliament, and it was not long before the House fully recognized his ability. But the struggle to obtain this recognition was stern and sharp. As he rose in his place in Parliament to make his

frequent speeches, he had to fight against the usual prejudice entertained against men who are unknown to England's social or family history. But the young man, in spite of early failures, in spite of every kind of opposition, rapidly gained the ear of the House and the confidence of the country. He studied every phase of English character, and the result of his studies made him understand to an exquisite nicety how to deal both with friends and opponents. His humour, his epigrammatic smartness, his eloquence, were soon appreciated by his party, whilst his biting sarcasms and fierce denunciations wrought no slight damage in the ranks of the foe. It was soon perceived that he was a man to be encouraged and to be feared; consequently the leader of his party kept his eye upon the "Attic Adventurer," as his enemies called him. Gradually Istrias ascended the political ladder. He became in successive Ministries Under-Secretary for the Colonies, then President of the Poor-Law Board, then President of the Board of Trade, then First Lord of the Admiralty, then

Home Secretary, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and we now meet him as Lord Keeper of Conventions. On his acceptance of this high office he was raised to the peerage as Baron Salamis, and invested with the Grand Cross.

That there are two opposite lights in which character can be regarded was plainly exemplified in the case of Lord Salamis. It was the characteristic of the man to be either immensely liked or intensely hated. No one regarded him with either lukewarm dislike or affection. His friends idolized him, and almost adored his genius. To his enemies the very mention of his name was like contradiction to insanity. They accused him of being a political charlatan, an adventurer, a time-server, and one who always managed to identify his own interests with those of the nation. Bitter critics in the press assailed him, hosts of political pamphlets were published against him, a hostile clique in the House marked him down as the special butt for their hatred ; but all in vain. Lord Salamis rose yearly higher and higher in the estimation of the

public, and the malice and hatred of his enemies were powerless to harm him. Gradually his foes, seeing that their enmity was unproductive of any end, left him alone, or only gave vent for their malignity in scurrilous attacks in the press. But Lord Salamis cared little for hate. "What is hate," he used to say, "but the shadow cast by success?"

Opposite Lord Salamis, and on the left hand of Lady Isabella, was a man also of some note. Darrell Kingairloch had not long been called to the Bar before he won his spurs in the literary world. A work, written anonymously on philology, at a time when that subject was but little studied, attracted universal attention, and was the beginning of the fortunes of the young Scotchman, who now relinquished all thoughts of law, and betook himself to what was in his eyes the more congenial paths of literature. As editor of an important scientific magazine and author of various works on ethnology and comparative philology, his name soon became a household word in erudite society. His pen was never idle: what with essays

on scientific topics, historical criticisms, antiquarian articles, papers for the Royal Society, for the Anthropological Society, for Social Science meetings, and lectures at the Royal Institution, it seemed as if rest or leisure were enjoyments utterly unknown to him. At last a work, singular both in style as well as in subject, constituted the climax of his good fortune. "Teuton or Greek?" was the rage of the season. Ladies read it for its quaint anecdotes; men read it for its novel arguments and deductions, and the critics vied with each other in the extravagance of their eulogies and the bitterness of their abuse. In this book Kingairloch endeavoured to prove by historical data, comparative philology, craniological observations, and national characteristics that the English were not descended from the Teutons, but from the ancient Greeks. It was a clever, thoughtful work, and in spite of the hostility of those who differed from the author, ran through several editions. One of the results of its publication was to create a friendship between Lord Salamis and Kingairloch; and the statesman soon

had an opportunity of proving the nature of his sentiments by offering the distinguished author one of the Commissionerships for the Inspection of Family Papers that had just fallen vacant, an appointment which was gladly accepted.

Colonel Mowbray did not much approve of literary men as a rule, for he classed them with artists, fiddlers, singers, and other queer people that he occasionally met with at conversaziones ; but he liked to know men who were considered famous in the eyes of the world. He had made the acquaintance of Kingairloch at dinner one night at Lord Salamis's, and the moment the fortunate author was appointed Commissioner of the Family Papers the Colonel began so to play his cards that his acquaintanceship should ripen into friendship. His efforts were successful, and Kingairloch became a frequent guest at Colonel Mowbray's house in town and at Yllton. The Colonel was in the seventh heaven when in the next blue book of the Family Papers Commission nine pages were devoted to a description of "the interesting and important family

manuscripts in the possession of Colonel Mowbray, the present representative of the ancient Mowbrays, of Yllton-Tyrell. These papers throw considerable light upon the state of the domestic affairs of the kingdom during the reigns of the Edwards, and the period immediately subsequent to the Restoration. We recommend this valuable series of documents to the attention of the Camden Society."

As to personal appearance, Kingairloch was by no means an ill-favoured man. A high, wide forehead, covered with long curly sandy hair; keen grey eyes, with a bright sarcastic twinkle in their expression; a sharp hooked nose, with a touch of temper in the shape of the nostrils; and a long brown beard, reaching half way down his broad manly chest, complete his portrait. The expression of the face in repose was grave and sad, and there had been that in Kingairloch's life to make him so. The usual fate of authors (why are so many authors unhappy in their homes? Is it because they are so bitten by the desire for fame as to have no time to cultivate the

affections ?) had attended upon his domestic life, and his marriage lines had fallen not in pleasant places. As had been the case with Montaigne and Dante, Domenichino and Shakspeare, Milton and Molière, Addison and Rousseau, and a host of others, the wife of Kingairloch had been anything but a comfort beneath his roof. At last a discordant union was sinfully broken. Whilst Kingairloch was studying the Origin of the English, his wife was interesting herself in the doctrine of Selection, and one July morning put her studies into practice by eloping with a young squire who lived in the neighbourhood. Divorce followed this iniquitous act ; but upon the husband, who deeply felt the dishonour to his name, the blow came with such crushing force that he never forgot it. From a domestic man he changed into a thorough misogynist. Like Montaigne, he said that nothing would induce him to try marriage a second time.

The other guests at Yllton deserve no particular notice. There was an elderly peer who had just quitted the turf, and who looked as if he would soon be laid under it ;

a pretty young widow, flirting with Lionel Mowbray, the Colonel's eldest son, as pleasant an attaché as ever copied a despatch or led a cotillon; an elderly young lady, a millionaire, who amused her declining years by courting proposals, and then ignominiously rejecting them; a young Guardsman, who had just returned from the United States, where he said he had been treated very kindly—and very often; a member of the Alpine Club who had gone over the Ural mountains on a bicycle, or said he had, which amounted to much the same thing; a Polish patriot whose wrongs had soon set him to rights in the London fashionable world, and whose name could only be pronounced by beginning with a cough, followed by a hiccup, and then airily ended with a sneeze; and a few other people who need no special mention.



CHAPTER VII.

VAN DOORT'S MILL.

THE Colonel had been as good as his word in introducing Kit to Lord Salamis, and diplomatically arranged a few opportunities for his nephew to ingratiate himself with the great man. These opportunities were not thrown away by my hero. When at Oxford Mowbray had carefully studied the views and opinions of Lord Salamis on political subjects, and occasionally, if the strict truth be told, had introduced them, though unwittingly, as his own, when speaking at the Union. He now modestly talked with the minister when opportunities permitted about politics and the state of the country, and framed his observations with a view less to express his own opinions

than to elicit those of the peer. The statesman was very fond of the society of young men, provided they did not give themselves airs, nor seek to instruct their elders, as is rather the fashion with some of our modern youth. He accordingly was disposed to regard Kit, who in the society of the great had the good sense to listen and observe rather than to argue and dispute, very favourably, and thought him a manly, sensible young fellow.

"You have left Oxford, I think you said, Mr. Mowbray?" asked the peer one morning as Kit and he, with the rest of the men, were walking down to the stables for the customary matutinal inspection of the horses.

"Yes, about six months ago," replied Kit.

"And are you in any profession?" asked the statesman, putting up his glass to watch a flight of rooks wheeling past. "What an intolerable noise those birds make! I wonder Colonel Mowbray can stand it—so near the house too."

"Oh, my uncle is very proud of his

rookery, and as for the noise, he says it's nothing after the House of Commons. No, I am in no profession at present—indeed I don't know which one to enter, they are all so full."

"You have never thought of adorning the diplomatic line, like your cousin?" smiled Lord Salamis.

"I am afraid whatever line I take up it will have to be labour in stern earnest, and not playing at work. I am not heir to a large fortune, thanks to the law of primogeniture;" and the young man laughed.

"All the better for you: the prize which is attained by sheer hard work is infinitely sweeter than that acquired by a man who, as Beaumarchais says, has only taken the trouble to be born."

"Yes, my lord, when he *has* gained the prize; but look at the numbers of men who fail in these days of—what my uncle calls—overcrowded competition."

"And look at the number of men, my young friend, who have *not* failed. The difference between failure and success lies only in the power of the will. A man who

resolves to succeed *will* succeed. As my poor friend Caxton used to say, 'The longer I live the more I am certain that the great difference between men—between the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant—is *energy*—invincible determination—a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory.' And he was right. A man endowed with that quality will do anything that can be done in the world, and no circumstances will ever make a *man* without it. The road to success, like that other road the Church speaks to us of, is a toilsome, narrow way; but to the resolute pedestrian—the energetic hard-worker—who sticks to the path and doesn't lose himself in the byeways, the reward at the end is a certainty. *Moi qui parle* have proved the truth of what I state."

"But then at the present day there is such an immense deal of opposition," began Kit.

"Opposition!" laughed Lord Salamis, contemptuously; "who cares for opposition, unless it be to goad him on to fresher and more vigorous efforts? Do you think

Racine was deterred from becoming a poet by the sneers of his tutor, or Petrarch by the opposition of his father, or Alfieri by that of his uncle? Do you think that any of those whose names live in the echoing halls of history would ever have been great had they been daunted by opposition? Look at the statesmen of England—”

“Oh, but all these were infinitely above the average run of mankind.”

“And how do you know that you are not above the average? Indeed your University career has already proved the contrary. You don't know what you can do till you try. It is only by perseverance and the conquest of obstacles that a man ever becomes really great, and shows of what mettle he is made. If all the men who have attained eminence had given in after their first failure, or at the first sign of opposition, our list of celebrities would be indeed a poor one. Burke's first speech was coughed down. Dryden's and Swift's first pieces were damned; what are Raphael's “Dream” and Gibbon's “History of Switzerland” but miserable failures?

Weren't the first appearances of Kean, Kemble, and Mrs. Siddons cordially hissed? Success! what is success but the triumph which determination forces from failure?"

"Oh, I don't think," laughed Kit, "I should mind opposition so long as I knew what line to embrace. At present my father and friends are engaged in choosing my destiny."

"Bad plan that!" replied Lord Salamis, slowly puffing the smoke from his fragrant cigarette. "Every man knows best what he is suited for, especially at your age. Parents and friends often mistake the bent of a man's mind. Hume's father thought his son fit only to be a merchant. To their dying day the parents of Montaigne said that their son ought never to have been an author. Both Sheridan and Isaac Barrow were considered by their mothers as wanting in intelligence; and Handel's father always regretted that his son had exchanged law for music. Did not Scott's best friend say that Waverley would be a failure? Did not Herder advise Goethe not to write 'Faust,'

and Hume that Robertson should abandon all thoughts of his 'History of Charles the Fifth?' No," added his lordship, looking keenly at Kit, "I am a great advocate for a man following out his own inclinations. What a man likes best he does best. And all of us who are endowed with any talent show signs almost in our childhood of what we wish to become. Don't biographers tell us that Smeaton when a child of six made a windmill? that Cardinal Du Perron when only seven asked for a pen to write books against the Huguenots? that West when a boy exclaimed, 'A painter is a companion for kings?' that when mere lads Hartley determined to write a book on the nature of man, Bacon a work on philosophy, Milton an epic poem, De Thou a history? And have you no inner voice prompting you to choose for yourself a career?"

Kit was about to reply when they were joined by the Colonel and his son, and the subject dropped.

"I have been riding my hobby to your nephew," said Lord Salamis, laughing plea-

santly, to the Colonel; "and now let me see whether you have something better to ride." And they entered the stables.

Lord Salamis was never negligent in impressing upon the young men he took any interest in that if they only worked they would assuredly command success. "Success," he used to say, "is but the result of failure—if you have never been a fool you will never be a wise man, and if you have never failed you will never be successful. It is mediocrity which never fails because it never truly aspires. The best across country are not those who have had the fewest falls."

Accordingly Kit, after his conversations with the statesman—which to the Colonel's delight were now becoming tolerably frequent, and from which he augured great things—began to look back with regret upon the indolent life of the last few months, and vowed that when he got back to town he would read diligently and put his shoulder to the wheel in stern earnest. He resolved no longer to dally with time in waiting for an appointment, but to enter a

great lawyer's chambers and "grind" at once for the Bar.

An event was, however, about to happen which altered the nature of his resolutions.

One morning, as he was smoking his after-breakfast cigar (that most enjoyable of all weeds !) in the boat-house by the lake, he thought he would take his rod and see what sport could be found in the brown waters of the Marle, over whose reaches and heavy swirls he had many a time cast his flies with good result. His uncle was busy in his library about some magisterial concerns; Lord Salamis was writing letters to two Working Men's Associations; Kingairloch was arranging his materials for a mighty onslaught against the Germans, whom he cordially hated; the maiden and millionaire was flirting vigorously with the young man in the Coldstreams; some of the ladies were being driven over to see a ruin, accompanied by Lionel Mowbray, whilst the few young men staying in the house were pottering about the lawn and park shooting rooks.

It was just the morning for sport.

A soft yellow mist hung about the atmosphere, thick woolly clouds veiled the sky, whilst the tender westerly wind blew with just sufficient strength to cause a fly from one's casting line to tilt deftly over the water. Kit, like most Bighshire men, was an enthusiastic votary of the gentle craft, and like a true angler only appreciated sport when alone. *Nunquam minus solus quam solus* was his motto when by the stream's side.

By the time he had finished his cigar he resolved to put his thoughts into execution, and with his creel slung round him, his rod-case under his arm, and his well-stocked fly-book in his pocket, was soon hastening through the northern frontiers of the park to a certain well-beloved spot in the Marle, where a rotten stump diverted the slack of the rivulet, where the weeds floated thickly in deep water, and where overhanging slabs of turf proved most enticing haunts. It was there that his rod had caught in times bygone many a quivering beauty, that had panted life away on the fern and violets around.

As he wended his steps along a meadow which skirted the banks of a rapid mill-stream, he was awoke from the reverie of his thoughts by a young woman running up to him.

“Oh! Mr. Kit, sir, please come down here! Miss Istrias is in the punt, which has somehow got loose, and she’s being a-carried down the stream towards the mill. Come quick, sir; her nurse is almost mad with grief and fear!”

Lord Salamis had some few years ago lost his wife, the daughter of an Irish gentleman, a distant cousin of Mr. Barillon. From the union sprung an only child—a little fair-haired girl, full of fun and merriment, called Violet. To Lord Salamis, who was passionately attached to the memory of his wife, this little girl, whose looks and smile reminded him ever of the woman he had lost, was an object of the deepest affection. Wealth, ambition, fame, were valuable to him only because they would make his little daughter as she grew up to womanhood proud of her sire. Nothing ever parted father and child;

where he went little Violet always, when it was possible, accompanied him. Like Mrs. Sydney Smith, who, according to her husband, always feared that instantaneous death to her children would be the result of her absence even for a day, so Lord Salamis, whenever circumstances compelled him to be away from his daughter, conjured up such fearful thoughts about the fate of his little charge that his separation from her was one long nightmare of nervous terror and morbid presentiments.

Kit and little Violet, who was about nine years of age, were excellent friends, and the little girl had told her father that she loved Mr. Mowbray better than all the world, because he had given her a white pink-eyed rabbit. Many a romp had she and Kit together, and you may be sure that Lord Salamis did not like my hero the less because he was kind and attentive to his daughter. And now here was this fondly cherished child on the brink of a rude and cruel death !

Kit knew well what the mill-stream was, and that the current of its waters was

as rapid as the Rhine. Many a time had he whipped its waters above and below the mill for the feeding trout, and many a time had he as a boy accompanied his cousin Lionel, and with their terriers hunted for rats amid the worm-eaten precincts of that same mill. The mill was situated in a hollow behind a curve of the river called the "Gut," where the bed suddenly sloped, and caused the water to rush past with great speed. Unlike most English mills, the water-wheel was after the Dutch principle, and revolved in what is technically termed a "course" of some five feet in depth, instead of one of merely two feet.

The banks of the river, just where the bed sloped, and where the rush of the water was very considerable, were for protection's sake strongly bricked. Kit well knew that a boat once in the "gut" and between the bricked embankment could not live for a minute, but would be drawn over the stone dam which conveyed the water into the "course," and be sucked under the wheel immediately.

Throwing down his rod and basket, he ran at full speed across the meadow to the

river, which was an off branch of an important tributary of the Severn. He hoped that the punt, though drifting to the "gut," would yet be some distance from the embankment, and that he could jump into the river, swim to the boat, and either paddle it to shore, or, if the paddle had been removed, swim with the child to the bank.

As he approached the stream he saw the exact position of affairs. The punt, broadways, was rapidly drifting towards the dreaded "gut," and was almost on the point of entering the channel, where the banks made the river curve. Beyond this curve was the embankment and the fatal mill! Kit now saw that the danger was greater than he expected—the punt once round the curve, all hope of salvation was well nigh impossible. Nothing then intervened between the swift flow of the waters and the heavy mill-wheel, whose constant thuds and roaring dashes now broke distinctly on his ear. He increased his speed, and the next minute was on the banks of the river.

A woman whom he recognised as the child's nurse, with face pale as death and hair dishevelled, was running along the side of the river, alternately shrieking to her little charge and imploring help from the mill, half frantic with fear, grief and despair. But the only answers to her prayer were the whistling of the westerly wind among the willows that fringed the banks of the stream, and the cruel roar of the mill-wheel as its palette boards churned the waters underneath. And as if in mockery of her nurse's agony was little Violet, quietly seated on the punt, her small Tyrolese hat half off her head, her long crimped curls floating in the breeze, her little hands clapping with delight, and a joyous smile overspreading her face as the boat went, now broadways, now longways, along the stream!

"Oh, Miss Violet! Miss Violet! why did you disobey me? Oh, why didn't I keep a-looking after you! Help! help! Oh, sir! Oh, Mr. Mowbray, sir! Thank God, he'll save her!"

The last exclamation of the woman was

owing to this—Kit had run along the banks of the river a few yards ahead of the punt, which was now turning the dreaded curve, had thrown off his coat and pot-hat, and the next instant was in the stream. A few strokes brought him to the punt's side—he seized hold of the iron ring, through which was a rope used for mooring purposes, and endeavoured to get into the boat. In vain. The punt still kept on its course, and Kit, try as hard as he could, was unable to free his legs, which were drawn under the flat bottom of the boat by the suction of the water. The current of the stream was getting stronger and stronger every second. The boat was now in mid-river, and Kit saw the angle formed by the bank becoming more and more obtuse, and there before him the straight rush of the water between its bricked embankment and the black revolving wheel, half buried in the angry foam! Not a moment was to be lost.

“ Violet, darling, here, give me your hand—yes, that's it!—now, don't be afraid—trust me!” And with one arm round the

child, who was now fully alive to the danger of her position, and with the other clinging to the side of the punt, he drew Violet closely to him, and then with a sudden jerk kicked himself free of the boat, and swam vigorously on his back to the nearest bank. The punt eddying round and round swept down the stream and over the dam, and was crushed like rotten timber beneath the heavy revolutions of the mill-wheel.

Kit had acted as he deemed best, but he was not fully aware of the peril of his position. Whilst clinging to the boat he knew that the stream was increasing in rapidity as it neared the embankment, but engaged as he had been in his vain endeavours to get into the punt, he was not conscious that the current had carried him as far as it had. By the time that he had freed himself from the boat, and had begun his struggles to reach the bank with his precious charge in his embrace (though from his plunge into the stream to his rescue of Violet only a few brief moments had elapsed), he was within a yard of the embankment. Thus not forty feet separated him from the wheel of the

mill. To his horror also he found that, strike out as hard as he could, that distance, instead of increasing, diminished. He was a vigorous and expert swimmer, and had won both at Eton and at Oxford more than one silver cup, but then he was unencumbered with clothes, and had only himself to manage and take care of. Whereas now his actions were hampered in every way, and in addition he had to stem a stream almost as strong as a mountain torrent.

Fortunately little Violet was so paralysed with fear as to cause him no more trouble than the mere weight of her burden. The two women on the banks, instead of hastening to the mill and doing their utmost to have the wheel stopped, were crying and screaming and pacing up and down the banks perfectly crazy.

"Get a rope and stop the wheel!" cried Kit. He had now turned over on his side, and was straining every nerve to battle against the current that swept round the curve of the river. But his efforts at the best were only sufficient for him to resist being carried away by the stream. No

amount of labour could make him effect anything like visible progress. He felt, too, that this resistance would soon have to end. His clothes and the weight of the child were weighing him down, and his efforts lessened in strength. Gradually he saw the grassy banks of the river give place to the damp mossy brick, and then he knew that resistance was well nigh hopeless, and that he was between the dreaded embankment. But his courage never failed. The waters around him rippled and eddied like a mimic sea from the swiftness of their pace, and for every foot he gained they carried him on three; but his pluck was true to him still. Bravely he struggled with the cruel current, but its tide only mocked him, and the roar of the wheel seemed to sound his funeral dirge. Strain every muscle as hard as he could, he felt that he could offer no resistance to the stream, and that unless immediate help came to hand his life was not worth another minute's purchase. But no help seemed nigh. The wheel was still revolving, and at every revolution the noise of its splash, crash, dash, became more terribly

distinct. He tried to tread water for a second, and cast an anxious glance around him. On the bank of the river was the nurse outstretched at full length in a dead faint. The other woman, whom he recognised as his cousin's maid, was nowhere to be found. She had not returned from the mill. Not a soul was near. Violet, who had lain quietly for the first minute in the arms of her would-be saviour, was now shrieking with fear, and doing all in her power to free herself. They were now but a few feet from the wheel, which was still in rapid motion. Already the water around was getting white with foam, and with a prayer, fervent but unspoken, Kit gave himself up for lost. But the current of the stream as it neared the mill swept with greater force along the left embankment, and it was to this side that Kit had drifted. His disengaged hand could almost touch its green, slimy bricks, and in vain he clutched its sides, like a drowning man at a straw. The mossy, slippery surface, however, gave him no hand-hold.

Suddenly his outstretched hand came in

contact with some rough, jagged material that no longer eluded his grasp. Part of the brick-work of the embankment had given way, and its broken bricks afforded an excellent hold for a half-drowning man. Kit wedged his hand firmly into one of the fissures caused by the dilapidated brick-work, and to his joy found that with that *point d'appui* he could offer resistance to the rushing waters. Violet had now ceased her struggles; the shock to her nerves, the cold, the sight of the large black wheel becoming nearer and nearer, had rendered her again paralysed with terror. Her former efforts to escape were but the last flicker of a dying candle, and she was now, with arms around Kit's neck, resting her head on his shoulder, half unconscious.

Kit had now been struggling with the stream for about three minutes. No assistance was at hand. The mill-wheel still kept up its roaring revolutions. He heard not a voice.

As soon as he had secured a firmer hold in the cleft of the brickwork he raised himself up and cried out "Here! help! help!"

No answer.

If ever assistance would have been useful to him it would have been now. A pair of strong arms from the embankment could have hauled Violet up in safety, and then have given him a helping hand. His whole weight was now resting on his right arm, firmly wedged into the cleft; but he was beginning to feel done up and he feared that exhaustion might cause him to relax the tenacity of his clutch. Again he cried with all his force. Ere the sounds of his voice died in his throat there appeared suddenly before him a wild-looking woman—her hair was streaming in the wind, her face was as white as the foam beneath the mill-wheel, her whole appearance looked like that of a maniac. Kit recognised her as Violet's nurse. She stood with arms outstretched on the edge of the embankment, and with figure bent low as if she were a wild animal about to make a spring upon her prey.

"Take care!" cried Kit, "or else you'll be in the water. Here. Kneel down just over my head, and I'll try to hand up Violet

to you. Get yourself in as firm a position as you can !”

The woman obeyed: all pale and trembling she knelt down, and with one hand firmly grasping the top brickwork of the embankment, she let her other arm swing over Kit’s head.

Kit pressed his knees and toes as hard as he could against the slimy embankment in order to be able to get some additional support, and then with his left arm he disengaged the now quite unconscious child from his embrace, and with his hand firmly clasped around her wet clothes strained every nerve to raise her up, till she was in reach of the nurse’s grasp. With energy almost superhuman, and fear giving her a man’s strength, the nurse’s arm caught hold of Violet, pulled her vigorously on to the embankment, and the next minute, with a wild shriek of maniacal joy, she was hugging and kissing her precious charge, lying at last safe in her embrace. Then, with the selfishness of fear and without a word, she ran with the child to the Hall.

That exertion had cost Kit dear. Whilst

handing up Violet to the woman he lost his hold of the broken bricks, and no sooner was the girl out of his arms than he felt himself slipping into the stream, and being drawn towards the dam over which the waters dashed into the foaming "course." There was only one plan by which he could escape being dashed against the wheel. The mill-wheel, as I have said, was upon the Dutch principle, and revolved in a "course" of some four feet in depth. Kit, as he felt his arm gradually losing the hold it was impossible for him to recover, determined to let himself be carried towards the dam, and then plunge into the "course" and dive under the mill-wheel. Once on the other side he could climb up the flood-gates, and then be safe. It was an awful choice, but anything was better than letting himself be tamely dashed against the wheel. His suspense was not long. He was soon carried on till he felt the dam beneath him, then he dived at once into the roaring, frothy, brick well. But just before he dived he saw that the mill-wheel stopped, and that people were rushing towards the embankment.

With head bent low and arms outstretched, he dived deep into the foaming course. He saw the water as black as night—then the blackness ceased—he could see the light again—then—crash!—he remembered no more.





CHAPTER VIII.

“ALL’S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.”

WHEN Kit recovered consciousness he found himself lying in his room. By his side was the little yellow-wigged Doctor of Yllton looking at him attentively—close to the apothecary was also Lady Isabella, tears standing in her eyes.

“Halloa, Peters, what’s the row?” asked Kit, as his hand travelled to his forehead and found it bandaged, and on the bandage a small bladder full of ice. “Oh, ah! I remember—that confounded mill stream—smashed my head against something—nothing serious, Doctor, eh?”

“No, no, my gallant young friend; you’ll soon be about again; keep quiet, and don’t excite yourself,” replied the Doctor, feeling his pulse.

"Yes, my dear Kit, you must not excite yourself," repeated Lady Isabella, bending over her nephew and kissing him tenderly. "You must place yourself in our hands and be very obedient. You are a great hero, and we intend to make an immense deal of you."

"But, my dear aunt, I'm all right," said Kit, trying to rise in his bed. "Oh no, I'm not though," he immediately added, a little gravely, as he fell back upon the pillow.

"You keep quiet, Mr. Kit, and you'll soon be able to get up again; there is nothing serious the matter with you, I can assure you."

"But there soon will be if I have to take much of that stuff," laughed Kit, as the Doctor poured a brown mixture out of a medicine bottle. "I hate physic. Aunt Isabella" (to that lady, who was quitting the room), "give me some globules instead."

"No, no, Kit; when there's nothing the matter with you I am ready to treat you homœopathically, but at present you must be very good, and do as Dr. Peters tells you." And Lady Isabella left her nephew

alone with the Doctor. Kit, ever since the medical profession had abused the system of training, did not think very highly of its members ; indeed, he was accustomed to say that modern doctors were rather worse than the ancient highwaymen, for they not only took your money, but your life.

"I say, Doctor, how long have I been lying here?" asked Kit, as he finished his medicine.

Dr. Peters pulled out his watch. "About two hours. How do you feel?"

"Well, all right whilst I'm lying down ; it's only when I try to get up that my head feels so beastly queer. I knocked it against something whilst I was diving, didn't I?"

"Yes, your head went against the hull of the smashed punt, which was caught in some iron girders underneath the woodwork of the mill ; but you had better not talk."

"Oh, it will do me no harm. Have I cut myself much?"

"Very slightly ; the blow more bruised and stunned you than caused any very serious abrasion of the skin."

"I forget all about it ; how did I come

here? Who fished me out of the mill?" asked Kit, whilst untying the bandage round his head and looking at himself in a small hand-glass that lay by his side.

"You had better keep that bandage on, Mr. Kit——" began the Doctor.

"Yes, yes, I'll put it on afterwards; I only want to satisfy myself that my beauty isn't much damaged," said Kit, laughing.

"Oh, you have come very well out of your accident, I can tell you; but you have had a near shave of ending your distinguished existence this time, my young friend. You may live to be as old as Methuselah, but you'll never have a nearer escape from death than you have had in yon stream," replied the Doctor, helping Kit to remove his bandage.

Dr. Peters had said truly that Kit had come well out of his accident. Just where the hair joins the forehead there was a slight cut, and above that, and covered by the hair, was a swelling as big as an egg. It was to reduce this that he wore the bandage, which had been steeped in an opiate lotion.

"You are right, Doctor," said Kit, gravely,

as the apothecary bound the bandage round his head again. "Thank God! I *have* come well out of it. But who saved me?"

"The miller. He ran out of the mill as soon as the young woman could find him, which was after some minutes, for he was up at the top of the mill in the granary, and at once gave orders to have the wheel stopped. Just as his orders were complied with you dived, and if it had not been that the wheel had been stopped you must have been crushed to a certainty. As you came up on the other side the miller rushed to your assistance, for he saw that you had severely knocked your head and were insensible. Tying a rope round his body, he gave one of its ends to some of his men, who had just then returned from their dinner, and jumped into the stream. He caught hold of you under the arms, and then both of you were pulled out. I was at once sent for, and, fortunately being at home, came immediately. You were lying insensible upon some sacks, but a very brief examination showed me that there were no bones broken or anything very serious the matter.

I was, however, afraid of you catching rheumatic fever, for there was no accommodation at the mill, and so at once had you carried along here."

"I'm sure I am very much obliged to both you and the miller. It must have caused an awful shock to Lady Isabella seeing me brought up here, though."

"Ah, but we carefully avoided creating a scene, and brought you through the back of the house, and up the servants' staircase. It was not till Stephen had put you comfortably to bed, and I saw that there was no cause for anxiety, that I told Colonel Mowbray about it. It was managed very quietly, I can assure you."

"That's all right. And how is the little girl?"

"Oh, she is none the worse for her wetting. I have had her put into a warm bath and given her a soothing mixture, and I daresay by this time she is fast asleep. Do you feel any appetite?"

"No, not at all," replied Kit; "I shouldn't mind something to drink, though."

The Doctor felt his pulse.

"You feel sleepy, a slight oppression on the chest, and the extremities rather feverish, don't you?" said the Doctor, shaking his head authoritatively, and, like most doctors, making a shot at the symptoms.

"Oh no, I don't feel a bit sleepy, and, if anything, my feet are rather cold," replied Kit.

"Exactly, exactly," said the Doctor; "the usual symptoms—just a touch of ague and a slight congestion of the liver; but——"

"Well, I don't *feel* any aguish symptoms, or anything like bile," answered Kit.

"Exactly, exactly," replied Dr. Peters; "we shall put you to rights again very soon. I shall now go to her ladyship and tell her what to give you, and then shall drop in and see you in the evening for a few moments. I shouldn't be surprised if you felt yourself almost well by that time. A powerful constitution like yours won't take long to recover the shock it has received. If ever a man deserved a medal from the Humane Society you do; it's the most gallant thing that has ever happened in this part of the world. You have rendered yourself and Van Doort's mill

for ever famous in the county history of Bighshire."

"I hope the *Bighshire Mercury* will kindly spare me," said Kit, smiling.

The *Mercury* was the Conservative journal, with a circulation of about five-and-twenty copies, of which the Colonel took a dozen. Dr. Peters was one of its most enlightened contributors.

"I haven't the slightest doubt that my assistant is at the present time engaged in writing an eloquent and descriptive account of your noble act for next Saturday's edition. If you would like a little intellectual amusement I will give you his paragraph to translate into English."

"Not for worlds. The contents of the *Mercury* had better be uniform," laughed Kit.

"You are fond of your joke still, I see, Mr. Kit. Well, it is a good sign. I shall report very favourably of you downstairs. Good day." And the little man left the room.

On the landing he met Lord Salamis just coming out of his daughter's room.

"I think there is no necessity for my tele-

graphing to London for Dr. —," said his lordship; "my child is fast asleep."

"Not the slightest, my lord, not the slightest," replied the apothecary, smiling gaily. "I pledge your lordship my reputation" (what a valuable guarantee!) "that there is not the smallest shadow of alarm. After her rest your daughter will be as well as ever."

"And the patient you have just quitted, is he progressing favourably?"

"Oh, nothing could be better, my lord. If it were not that the vehemence of the blow still rendered him giddy he would be up and about now. I am just going to see her ladyship to give my report. Good day, my lord!"

"*Good morning!*"

The shock had told upon the nervous system of Lord Salamis more severely than even he could well control. His face was deadly pale, and there were rings under his eyes and furrows on his brow which made him look ten years older. The most impassive men have some vulnerable point, and little Violet was to Lord Salamis what the

heel was to Achilles. Touch him there, and he was as sensitive as the tenderest of women.

The blow had been enough to agitate him. The little girl's nurse, as soon as she had recovered from her ecstatic joy, consequent upon regaining the possession of her precious charge, had set off at once to the Hall. Wrapping Violet carefully in her shawl, she hoped to regain her room without being perceived, and then by coaxing and presents to make the child keep all account of the accident from her father. Miss Mowbray's maid, she knew, would not tell anything ; for the truth was that both the young women had surreptitiously gone to the meadow to flirt with a couple of the tradesmen of the village, and it was whilst they were so absorbed in discussing the respective merits of their commercial Lotharios, that Violet had run down to the stream and got into the punt for fun, little dreaming of the consequences that would ensue. As for Mr. Kit, the nurse was sure he would not be hard upon a poor woman, and by telling the true story get her instantly dismissed. She never

for one moment doubted that Kit was saved. Her scheme, however, was not to be rewarded with success.

Lord Salamis was sitting in what was called the "Demidoff" morning room, from the fact of its possessing several valuable malachite works of art which had formerly belonged to the Russian connoisseur. This room from one of its windows overlooked a small shrubbery walk at the back of the house which led to the servants' quarters. The statesman had been busy writing his opinion upon the question of Reciprocity to the Secretary of the "Working Men's Association," and was quietly reading aloud his letter, as was his custom. "Now do not jump to the conclusion," he read to himself, "that I am opposed to Free Trade: all I wish is that it should rest upon a sound principle. But what I am utterly opposed to, is that duties on imports and exports which tend both to supply the State with an adequate revenue, and to protect native industry, should be lessened or repealed without any attempt being made to arrange with foreign countries a system of reciprocal in-

tercourse. Is it fair to ourselves that we should throw away the advantages which it took us generations to secure, and compete with our heavily taxed products at home and abroad with the untaxed products of foreign nations? Most certainly not. Let us set trade free by all means at our disposal, but do not let the freedom be all on one side. Of course it is obvious that if all nations were to abandon what I may call the forcing system and——”

Just then a flight of rooks threw a shadow on the letter which was to enlighten all the members of the Association. Lord Salamis looked up. Along the shrubbery walk he saw a woman running hastily. In her arms was a child wrapped up in a shawl, and through the folds of the shawl issued dripping garments. It needed not the keen eyes of a father to recognise the running woman and the carried child. For Lord Salamis to open the French windows of the room, to cross the north angle of the lawn, and there on the walk meet face to face the affrighted nurse, was literally but the work of a moment.

"What is the meaning of this? Good God! what is the matter?" cried he, trembling in every limb and taking up into his arms his child, whose teeth were chattering with wet and cold.

The woman was dumb with fear and agitation. Violet at once hurriedly told her father that she had been upset in the punt, and saved from drowning by Kit.

"Take Miss Violet at once to your room and put her to bed," said Lord Salamis, sternly; "I shall have to speak to you later." The woman knew well what *that* meant, and doing all in her power to suppress a sob, she replaced the child in the shawl and hastened to her room.

A few minutes later Lord Salamis, who had at once sent his valet into Yllton for the doctor, was by his little daughter's bedside, her arms around his neck, and his head buried in her long golden hair. She had told him how she had been running about the meadows getting the flowers that bore her name, and that as Jane was busy talking, and not minding her at all, she got down towards the stream. There she saw some chickweed,

which she thought would be so nice for her new canary, that Lady Isabella had just given her. Whilst she was getting the chickweed she saw the punt tied to a big stick, and it looked so big, and the river so tempting, that she thought it would be such fun to play at being on board ship. So as Jane and Lucy were still talking together and not observing her, she jumped into the punt and began to pretend to be at sea. And in order to make the stream like the real sea she made the punt rock about, now to one side and then to the other, so that the motion of the boat loosened the rope that moored it to the stick, and then she felt herself going down the stream, and it was such fun, much better than being at sea. So she called out to Jane and told her that she was going to make a long voyage; and that nurse, when she saw her, gave a scream and ran after her as fast as she could, but the boat went faster and faster, and it was, oh, *so* delicious! And then Mr. Mowbray—not the one with the eyeglass, but the *nice* Mr. Mowbray—jumped into the stream, and told her that her life was in danger, and she was to trust to him; and

so she trusted to him. And because he couldn't get into the boat he took hold of her and pulled her into the water, and tried to swim to shore, but he couldn't; for then she saw a great big black wheel turning round and round, which seemed to drag them towards it, and she screamed and tried to free herself from Mr. Mowbray, but he would not let her go, and then she forgot what happened till she found herself in the arms of Jane.

"My darling, darling puss," said Lord Salamis, kissing his daughter vehemently; "what a naughty little child you are to run away from Jane! Just think what might have——"

"Papa, dear," said Violet, pressing her arms closer round her father's neck, "you are crying. Poor papa! Oh, I shall be such a good girl after this!"

"You don't feel cold, my pet—no shivering—no feverishness? Can you put your feet upon the hot waterbottle?"

"Oh, I feel so comfortable and snug. Have you seen Mr. Mowbray? Wasn't he brave and kind, papa dear?"

Lord Salamis was about to reply when

Colonel Mowbray knocked at the door. "Salamis, I want to speak to you!" The statesman went out to meet his friend. The Colonel was looking very pale and distressed. "This is an awful business," he said. And then he told him about the affair, and that Kit was lying insensible. "Peters says he will soon be all right, and that there are no bones broken or any internal injury. Let us hope that he does not underrate the case. I came to say that if you would like to see the Doctor I'll tell him to come here."

"Oh, I should, most decidedly! I sincerely hope there is not anything very serious the matter with your nephew. My little darling appears all right, but I should like to have those appearances confirmed by medical opinion."

"Well, I'll tell Peters to see you. Lady Isabella is with Kit, and the Doctor is of no use to him till he recovers his senses. Thank God, his father is not here!" And the Colonel went back to his nephew's room.

Dr. Peters saw Violet, said there was no cause for Lord Salamis to be anxious, recommended the child to be put into a warm

bath, and wrote out a prescription for some soothing mixture, in which was a slight opiate. The prescription was at once sent to the Doctor's surgery.

"I hope that there is no danger with regard to that brave nephew of Colonel Mowbray's?" asked Lord Salamis, as soon as his fears were removed about his daughter.

"Oh no, not at all, he has had a bad blow on the top of his head which has rendered him insensible, but otherwise he has sustained no serious injury. I should not be at all surprised if you were to see him down to dinner to-night."

"Could you tell me a few particulars, Dr. Peters, about the accident?" asked Lord Salamis.

And the Doctor told him all that he had gleaned from Miss Mowbray's maid and the men about the mill : which we already know.

Shortly after Dr. Peters had left Kit's bedside to report matters to Lady Isabella, my hero sank into a long, refreshing slumber. When he awoke he found the Colonel sitting by his couch watching him.

"Do you feel better, lad?" asked the old gentleman, kindly.

"Oh, very much," said Kit, returning the pressure of his uncle's hand. "If it weren't for that swelling on the top of my head, which feels a little lumpy, I should say there's nothing the matter with me."

"You are a plucky man, Kit!" said the Colonel, admiringly—pluck like that was a sure sign of ancient race. "What an adventure! Good heavens, the very thought makes me shudder! Had any harm come to you I could never have forgiven myself. What would your poor father——"

"Oh, by the way, you haven't written home about this, uncle?" asked Kit.

"Not yet. You know how your father worries himself. When we heard good accounts from Peters we thought there was no necessity to alarm them—it was a matter better left in your hands. Do you wish me to write?"

"Oh, certainly not. I wouldn't have them troubled at home for worlds; besides, there is no occasion."

"Quite so. All's well that ends well."

Thank God that things have turned out as they have. In the midst of life we *are* in death," said the Colonel, meditating as if it were a fact that he had never before realized.

"Who could have thought that a few hours ago you could have been so near—— Oh, it's awful! positively awful!"

"All's well that ends well," said Kit, cheerily.

"Yes, yes," said the old man, shaking his nephew's hand. "It is so, and I am of opinion that the affair will turn out well—— very well."

"What do you mean?"

"What do I mean? Why, that Lord Salamis is under great obligations to you, and I can vouch for my friend repaying such obligations with interest."

"Oh, but I never looked upon the matter in that light," said Kit.

"Ah, but I have; it was the very first thought that crossed my mind after Peters told me that no serious consequences would ensue from your accident. Salamis is not the man to forget your gallantry. Look at the young men he has befriended! It is

notorious how he likes young men—he keeps, as he says, all his animosity for the middle aged. Why, there was young St. Julien—Margaux is very poor, you know, and if it weren't for the directorships he holds he would have nothing to live upon—well, there was St. Julien earning his 120*l.* a year at the War Office, by adding up boots and shoes for the Clothing Department, when Salamis takes him by the hand, gets him appointed to some Boundary Commission, and he is now Governor of the Mosquito Islands, and of course always in England. Then there was Dick Lewis, Cantire's second son—the mull of Cantire, the wags called him, for he was such a booby—well, Salamis took a fancy to him because he was so bullied by the family, and popped him into the Exchequer of Receipt, where he got 800*l.* a year for writing his name—the only thing, they tell me, he can spell. How did Dormer, who was starving as an Inspector of Schools, get that splendid Crown living in the North? how did Burke Seaton, who was dying the death of the restless as a Queen's Messenger, become one of the Com-

missioners of the Board of Control? how did—— Good heavens! the list is endless of the young men whom Salamis has befriended."

"But I thought you said all those days were past, and that it was impossible for a Minister to help his friends?" asked Kit.

"Not his friends," said his uncle, with a very knowing look, "but his applicants—there is a difference, my boy. The *friends* of a great man will always be provided for, otherwise of what use is the State? It is the applicants who have to be shunted nowadays. Formerly you were only an applicant, and that is the reason we have been unsuccessful; now you will find that Lord Salamis will regard you as a friend, and the future, unless I am much mistaken, will be made pretty plain for you."

And then the Colonel, being in the humour for a chat, and finding that his nephew was in a similar mood, conjured up a vista of golden dreams, all of which represented a host of good things liberally bestowed upon Kit. As the young man listened to his sanguine uncle sketching his future biography à

couleur de rose—a good appointment, leading to some high post, a seat in the House, a brilliant marriage, &c.—he could not help smiling as he contrasted the different conversation that would have ensued had his father been by his side. The prizes of this world would not at such a time have been the chief topic of the Canon's discourse.

"And how do you feel now?" asked the Colonel, after he had spent something like an hour by his nephew's bedside. "Do you think you would be better up? Your aunt thought that you might like later to get up, and so has ordered a fire in the Balcony Room for you. What do you say?"

Kit raised himself up in bed and said that he had no objection to get up—he didn't want to make any fuss about himself.

"Very well," said his uncle, rising, "I shall send Stephen to help you to dress, and when you come down your aunt will see you." And he took his departure.



CHAPTER IX.

LORD SALAMIS' OFFER.

WHEN Kit was once up he felt much better than he had expected. The exertion of dressing had to a certain extent worn off his feeling of giddiness, and as he descended to the Balcony Room he could hardly believe that the past was aught but a dream. The Balcony Room was so called because it was situated just over the portico of the Hall, and its chief window opened out on to a balcony overlooking the park. It was seldom used excepting in summer, and then it became the favourite chamber of the kindly *châtelaine* of Yllton Tyrell.

Lady Isabella was seated before the fire, engaged in embroidering, when she heard Kit's step descending the staircase; she at once rose from her work, congratulated her

nephew most cordially on the rapidity of his recovery, and would not be content until she saw him completely ensconced upon the sofa, satisfying his inner man with a capital *consommé* and some delicious dry sherry. She sat by his side chatting pleasantly whilst she continued her work, nor did she quit the invalid till a long anecdote she was narrating about a ritualistic squabble between the Bishop of Bighceston and the Rector of St. Allboshe was interrupted by anything but a musical snore. She then folded up her work and left Kit to sleep as long as he listed.

When he awoke it was late in the afternoon. From his position on the sofa he could see the setting sun bathing in its red golden light the surrounding scenery, and throwing its lengthy shadows athwart the gnarled oaks and stately elms that studded the broad park of Yllton. Part of its light fell on the giant "white horse," cut out of the emerald turf on the distant downs, and made the Saxon trophy sparkle like the walls of Milan Cathedral when seen from Monte Monterone. Away to the south was the wood of Tyrell, its tall trees now green with

the bursting foliage, standing out in bold relief against the amber-coloured horizon. Many a time had Kit heard resounding through the naked copses the cheering cries of "Mark cock!" "Mark cock!" and many a good bag had his breechloader given him within its well-preserved haunts. Twinning its serpentine course amid meadow fern and bracken, like some long silver serpent, was the Marle, its rippling waters looking cold as sheeted steel in the deep shadow of the parting day. And away to the west was the big black mill shining like burnished gold in the full blaze of the lurid sunset. Kit could see the foam thrown off the palette-boards of its wheel glitter like a salt mine; and the sight made him reflect again on what might have been his fate had he been unsuccessful in his attempt to avoid its deadly gyrations. His reflections were interrupted by a gentleman in black softly knocking at the door.

"Come in!"

"Would it be convenient to monsieur to receive a visit from milor?" The speaker was Octave, Lord Salamis' valet.

Kit replied in the affirmative, and a few minutes afterwards Lord Salamis entered.

"I hope I am not disturbing you," said he, as he sat by Kit's side and put his hand kindly on the young man's shoulder; "but you can imagine how much I wish to see you, and to thank you for so bravely risking your own life to save that of my child. I should have come before now only I feared that my presence might retard your recovery after the severe accident you have met with. I hope you feel much better now that you are up, and that we may expect you soon to be amongst us again?"

"Oh, there is really nothing much the matter with me—at least nothing worth making a fuss about, Lord Salamis. I hope little Violet is none the worse for her ducking. Poor child, I fear she must have thought me a most cruel monster when she tried to free herself from my arms."

"She thinks of you, my dear Mowbray, as I think of you," replied Lord Salamis, smiling, though his voice trembled with emotion: "as a man of too brave and gallant a heart for us long to remain strangers to

each other. No mere words of cold conventional thanks can express to you the nature of the obligations that have made me eternally your debtor."

"Oh, Lord Salamis, I'm sure you really exaggerate what I have done. Any other man in my place would have——"

"He might or he might not. If he had done what you have done I should be equally indebted to him. You say I exaggerate, Mowbray. What, think you, would my life be if—if"—and the lips of the impassive man quivered—"my child had met a cruel, sudden death? To me Violet is the dearest treasure that I possess. Rob me of my fame; let every machination that the malice and ingenuity of my enemies invent fully prosper, I could bear up against them all—perhaps they might wound me, but they would not annihilate me. But to live all my days alone—childless, wifeless—to know in its sternest significance what is implied in that word *alone*—to feel every object in life dead and indifferent, to care for nothing that others admire, to drag on a wearied, existence, with memory ever lashing thought

into a frenzy of grief, by conjuring up the happy past and comparing it with the barren present — this, had not God made you His instrument in saving my child, would have been my lot. What says the Master of us all, ‘If the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?’ and the salt of this life, without which all is vapid and tasteless, are the affections. And,” he continued, looking at Kit earnestly from his dark eyes, “there is no such affection as that which exists between father and child — especially on the side of the father. You may imagine, then, what is that affection when the father is a widower and the child his only offspring. No, Mowbray, I have not exaggerated what I owe to you when I think of what *would* have been had you not appeared like a *Deus ex machinâ* upon the scene.” And he grasped Kit’s hand and held it in his own for a few moments, his head bent all the while in thought.

“Is Violet downstairs now, or is she in bed?” asked Kit, after a pause.

“She is being dressed, I believe. She

has been in bed all the afternoon. Would you like to see her?" ,

"Very much indeed; perhaps you would let her sit with me till she goes down to dessert?"

Lord Salamis rang the bell, and told the servant that he wished to see his daughter as soon as she was ready.

"Your aunt has been good enough to let her maid act as Violet's nurse in the absence of the one whom I have just dismissed for her most culpable negligence. I hope they get on well together."

Just then the door opened, and in rushed Violet, looking as well and happy as if she had never known what it was to have been half drowned some five hours ago. Kit could hardly believe that the pale, shivering child, with her matted, dishevelled hair, and wet, draggled clothes, whom he had held in his arms in the morning, was one and the same little body he now saw before him; her golden hair crimped, her little white French frock ornamented with violet ribbons, her silk sash and dandy little shoes

all the very perfection of taste and care.

"Well, little woman," said Kit, giving the child a hearty kiss as Lord Salamis lifted her up to his face, and then took her back again upon his knee; "so you feel more comfortable now than you did when last I saw you?"

"Oh yes! oh yes!—that horrid, horrid place!" replied she, shuddering; "but why have you got that white thing round your head, Mr. Mowbray? Are you hurt?"

"Mr. Mowbray," said Lord Salamis, pressing his lips upon his child's forehead, "hurt himself very much whilst getting my little puss out of the water; knocked his poor head against that hard, cruel punt that my naughty little girl got into without telling anybody."

"Oh, I'm so sorry!—so very sorry!" said Violet, her eyes filling with tears; and freeing herself from her father's caress, she jumped on to the sofa where Kit lay. "Whenever I hurt myself papa always says that he will kiss it, and that will make it

well, so I shall kiss your poor forehead, Mr. Mowbray, and see whether that will make it well too !”

Kit put his arms round the child's waist, and let her sit on the cushion by his side, whilst she amused herself by pretending to shave him with a paper cutter.

Till the gong sounded Lord Salamis remained with them. He spoke to Kit as if he were already one of his warmest friends. He told him anecdotes about his early life in the House of Commons, about his struggles and political enmities, and how sweet was success after failure. Then he alluded with a simple pathos to his marriage, and hoped that Violet would take after her mother, who was the sweetest and the best of women. Like many very reserved men, when once his cold inner reserve thawed towards any one whose talents or virtues inspired him with confidence, he went to the other extreme, and was infinitely more frank and genial about himself and his affairs than are often the most open and amiable of men. Kit could hardly believe that the Lord

Salamis sitting by his side, talking as simply and as easily about himself as if he were a brother undergraduate who had just dropped into his rooms at Baliol to have a chat, was *the* Lord Salamis whom society regarded as the cold, reserved, impassive man whom nothing moved, nothing daunted. It was given, however, but to few men for Lord Salamis to pay them the compliment he was paying my hero; but then it was not to every man that he felt under such deep and peculiar obligations.

"I don't know when I have had so long a gossip," said the peer, rising, as the first gong sounded and Octave presented himself at the door; "I shall come up here, if you will let me, and have a cup of tea with you after dinner?"

Kit bowed an affirmative, and the statesman left him.

For the next few days young Mowbray was the hero of the hour. The maiden lady of a certain age smiled most sweetly upon him, and offered him every encouragement to out rival the gallant and attentive Guardsman. The shaky old peer of racing fame

looked upon the tall, manly form of Kit out of his bleared, dissipated eyes, and bitterly thought that if he had only preserved his youth he would not be the wreck he now was. The young men who were in the house vowed for the hundredth time that health after all was everything, and that they would give up late hours and all its concomitants, and be like Mowbray, a model of well-regulated youth and splendid physique. As for Kit's aunt and cousins, and the women part of the household generally, they absolutely idolized him, and did all in their power to make him a conceited young coxcomb. But Kit was superior to all this flattery, and treated it as it deserved, jocosely and in gay good humour. He had gone to the mill, thanked the miller for his assistance, and seasoned thanks with something more valuable than words; whilst Lord Salamis refunded with interest the amount of the damaged punt. On the whole, therefore, after a few days, the chief actors in the affair were not much the worse for the accident.

Two or three mornings after this adven-
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ture Kit, and his cousin Lionel—true to the Frenchman's idea of an Englishman's occupation on a fine day—went out “to kill something;” in other words, they thought they would see if they could knock over a few rabbits in Mererill wood.

“I think you dropped into a very good thing that day you fished Violet out of your mill-stream,” began Lionel.

“Well, if you call struggling against a rapid current on a cold morning, expecting every moment to be crushed beneath a confounded mill-wheel, a very good thing—you are not the Sybarite I took you for, Li, that's all,” replied Kit.

“No, I don't mean that, but I think you're safe to get something out of Salamis, and that's what I call dropping into a good thing.”

“He hasn't hinted at such a thing to me, nor do I expect him to do so; for aught I know, he may think I'm not in want of anything.”

“Oh no, he doesn't, though! The governor, I know, has been singing your praises—and your wants. You've cut me

out, Kit, for I've been paying the most marked attention to the great man, in the hope that he would exercise his interest with the Foreign Office to get me transferred from a mission to an embassy. But, alas! it's all no go; you are the lucky beggar. Hush! there's a hare!"

Lionel was no false prophet. One morning, as Kit was lighting his cigar in the portico of the hall, he felt a hand placed lightly on his shoulder, and the voice of Lord Salamis say cheerily, "The very man I want to see! Come, and let us take a walk down to the lake, and smoke the pipe of peace together." And he linked his arm in that of the young man.

"I think you told me," said Lord Salamis, when they had gone a few paces in silence (one of the charms of smoking is that it never makes conversation forced), "that you had not yet decided upon what profession you should adopt?"

"I have not; I am still undecided which of the numerous roads to fame is to number me among its crowded pedestrians," said Kit, laughing.

“Suppose I were to direct your steps? I say only direct, for each one of us must work out his own way to fame. ‘It’s just a long road and a dirty road,’ as Wilkie used to say; ‘but if you keep on walking, there’s generally something to drink at the end.’ And he was right. A few of us, however, who are very exalted in birth or wealth, get occasionally driven to its end; but such good fortune is so very rare that the exception proves the rule. ‘In plain English, Mowbray, I offer you an appointment in my office—an Examinership of Foreign Conventions which has just fallen vacant. Would you care to accept it?’”

“I am sure you are most kind, Lord Salamis,” said Kit, his whole face glowing with pleasure, “and I need hardly say I accept it most gladly; indeed, nothing could——”

“Do not think I am offering you a fortune,” broke in Lord Salamis, abruptly; “I am but putting you in the way of acquiring a fair position and a respectable income. I offer you what hundreds of young men at the present day are struggling to obtain—an

opportunity ; it is for you to show what use you will make of it. If you choose to be simply an ordinary official, in course of time, as deaths occur and promotions arise, you will be sure of getting your twelve hundred a year. If, on the contrary, you choose to work—downright work——” He paused to emit a few puffs of smoke from his cigar.

“ Yes ? ” said Kit.

“ Well, you have a fair career before you,” said Lord Salamis. “ In the gift of the President of the Board there are several appointments connected with the foreign embassies which seldom go a-begging for lack of applicants.”

“ Oh, I have often heard of the Board of Conventions from a friend of mine—a man called Scrope.”

“ Do you know Scrope ? You could not know a more worthy man. He is a little disappointed at seeing an outsider appointed to a post that he himself ought to fill. But the organization of the Civil Service is not a satisfactory one for its members—*sic vos non vobis* is often its motto. And yet I do not

see how the fault is to be remedied. As long as Parliamentary Government is government by party so long must the State be in some measure a reservoir wherewith to satisfy the thirst of placemen whom it is policy not to neglect. It is, I grant you, discouraging to the working officials—and I was opposed to seeing a man like Scrope passed over—but it is expedient for the country, and expedience is to the State what justice is to individuals. By the way, you will have to pass an examination before the Commissioners. Do you know anything of French or German?”

“French I think I know pretty fairly, but of German I know nothing.”

“Hem!” muttered his lordship, reflectively; “you see you must know German—at least enough to pass a mild examination in it.”

“I could work it up—it wouldn’t take very long. My cousin, when he went in for his attachéship, scarcely read German for six months, and he passed satisfactorily. I am sure I could do the same.”

A little conversation ensued on this subject, and then it was decided that Kit was

to study German somewhere in Germany, whilst Lord Salamis would keep the appointment open for him.

"You cannot do better than follow the advice your cousin gives you, for his examination and that which you will have to undergo are precisely the same. My parting words are—for I leave Yllton in another hour—lose no time in making yourself fit for this examination—for the sooner you take your place at your bureau in Whitehall the better."

Then the conversation for awhile turned upon the Board of Conventions and its duties.

"And now, Mowbray," said Lord Salamis, extending his hand as they reached the hall porch, "good-bye for the present. Call upon me when you return to town, and tell me what your father thinks of my offer—your uncle, I know, cordially approves of it. Remember what I have said, 'you have a career before you,' and it remains for you to show of what mettle you are made. If I have read your character aright, I think you will be a worker, in spite of certain little

affectations I have observed, which will soon wear off. If you and I are not friends in the future I shall feel much surprised, and we can only be friends when I find in you an energetic fellow-worker. The monks of old were right—*laborare est orare*. Good-bye."

Kit's good fortune was soon known throughout the house, and became a subject of general congratulation. All the ladies were fully under the impression that he was on the high road to be Premier, or at least to some important post in the Cabinet; whilst the men who knew what they were talking about, and did not jump so rapidly to conclusions, gave him very much the same kind of advice as that of Lord Salamis, which counsel, being interpreted in the language of the ancient supporter of the Turf, was that "he had an excellent start, and that it would be his own fault if he didn't get placed at the end."

"You see, Kit," said the Colonel, button-holing his nephew, and leading him to the bay window of the dining-room after luncheon, "you have your own fortune to

make, as I have often told you. Your father—what with those impostors, the ‘True Fold,’ and other harpies—has well nigh run through all his patrimony; and indeed, if it were not for his living and canonry he would be in sad straits. Your mother, you know, has nothing. So you see, after your sisters have been provided for, there will be but a small balance for you. But now, thanks to Lord Salamis, instead of property you have excellent prospects, and it only depends upon you, as they all say, to attain a very respectable position in the world. And I may just tell you this in strict confidence”—the Colonel told every secret he possessed in “strict confidence”—“that Lord Salamis said privately to me that he had taken a fancy to you, and, provided he was not disappointed in you, would see that your interests were advanced; and, between you and me, that, coming from such a man as Salamis, means a good deal. Why, look at young Stopford, whom he took up!” exclaimed his uncle, who loved to exemplify all his assertions. “Stopford, ten years ago, had nothing but

his fellowship at All Soul's. Salamis met him, took a fancy to him, just as he has done to you, though without such good reason, and made him his private secretary. Then, seeing that Stopford was a really clever fellow, and likely to advance the interests of our party, Salamis, who is the chairman of the political committee of the 'Rosicrucian,' got his protégé into Parliament for the Close Burghs without it even costing the lucky member the price of his railway ticket to Renfrewshire. Well, Stopford, who seems to have had his wits about him, soon worked his way to a junior lordship, and very prudently added to his parliamentary position by marrying a Yorkshire heiress. And what is the result? Why, he has been twice in the Cabinet, and they tell me is going to take a peerage. I don't mention all this to you, Kit, to lead you to hope that you are going to follow in Stopford's steps, but only to show you that if you play your cards well—and that is, work and make yourself *useful* to Lord Salamis—he will not leave you in the lurch. He's under obligations to you, and, as I

have already said, likes to pay off such debts with considerable interest. Halloo! the women are going to play croquet! There's Lucy with a newly shaped mallet—that's the fourth she's had this year. Go out, Kit, and make yoursef useful. I must add up my labour book. These alterations are wretchedly expensive; but with manufacturing people around one building castellated palaces, it wont do for the representative of one of the oldest families in the county to be behindhand in improvements. There, go out! that pretty widow is making eyes at you. Be careful; she has been left very badly off." And the Colonel walked into his library.





CHAPTER X.

KINGAIRLOCH'S WEAKNESS.

KIT was not long before he acted upon the advice of Lord Salamis. On the very evening of the day he had been offered his appointment he took Lionel aside in the billiard-room, which did duty for the *tabagie* at Yllton, and asked him how he could best master the awful language.

“Well, you’ll never master it, my dear fellow, for the matter of that,” said Lionel, encouragingly. “I only know one Englishman who ever did, and he went out of his mind from the consequences. But if you mean you want a good cramming plausible knowledge which will be ample for your object you can’t do better than read up with

old Stüttmacher, the Professor of the University of Riesenheim."

"What, the critic and literary swell one hears so much of! Does he take pupils?" cried Kit.

"Yes, he does; a few only, though. He took me, and, thanks to him, at the end of six months I passed for my Attachéship (those were the days, before these Secretaryships) with flying colours. If you like, as he is a friend of mine, I'll write to him and ask him if he can take you."

"I wish you would. I rather like the idea of staying in Germany for a little. One will soon feel at home, I suppose? It has always seemed to me that the Germans are very like us. There is something in their character, literature, and family life so similar to our own that an Englishman couldn't feel a stranger amongst them long, I should think—the result of our being descended from the same stock, I suppose. The study of hereditary characteristics would be a curious one."

Lionel burst out laughing.

"I say, Kingairloch," cried he to that

distinguished literary man, who was smoking a short *brûle gueule* and talking travelling gossip with the young man who had gone over the Urals on a bicycle.

"Here is my cousin sticking up for the Germans, and saying that we are descended from the same stock."

Kit had not read "Teuton or Greek."

"My young friend," said Kingairloch to Kit, "you may thank your stars that there is Attic and not Teutonic blood in your veins, for if there had been a touch of the German about you, you wouldn't have saved that little pet, Violet, in the plucky manner you did. Water is an article that a German never took to yet, and never will; and if you had lived amongst them as much as I have you'd say the same. They are just as dirty as the proof sheets of their miserable compilers, whose originality they are always bragging of."

I believe there is an amiable theory afloat that every man is more or less mad when you come to examine him physiologically. This theory, whether true or no, undoubtedly received exemplification in the case of Darrell

Kingairloch. The very mention of the German nation, their simplicity, learning, social and political institutions, and the like, was the signal at once for him to indulge in the most vehement and unwarranted abuse. Why he hated those amiable people was a mystery, but that he did hate them no one could doubt for a moment. A fairly lenient critic in the main upon ordinary topics, he was most savage whenever his criticism was brought to bear upon the Teuton.

"But surely, Mr. Kingairloch," said Kit, astonished, "you cannot for a moment doubt the originality of the Germans? a nation that takes the lead in every branch of criticism, which has given to the world such poets as Goethe, Schiller, Lessing; such speculative philosophers as Spinoza, Kant, Fichter, and Hegel; such great generalizers from experience as Copernicus, Kepler, Leibnitz, and Oken; such——"

"Go on, my young friend; go on," laughed Kingairloch, sardonically; "you'll soon come to the end of your tether. The German roll of celebrities is not such a very extensive one; and, for the matter of that,

where is the nation that has not produced some eminent men? I don't for a moment deny that Germany possesses a few of whom any country would be proud, but that isn't owning much. All I say is that Germany has fewer *really* eminent men on her national list than almost any other country you like to name. Her people are just a race of painstaking, industrious hacks. All they do is to amass a lot of statements which they call facts, and when they've got them they don't know what the deuce to do with them. Bah! they are just the literary hewers of wood and drawers of water for the European intellectual world, which has to fashion the wood and make use of the water that the marvellous Germans have spent their energies in accumulating, without on earth knowing to what use to put them! Facts are of as much service to a German as brecks to a Highlander."

"With all deference to your superior judgment," laughed Kit, "I beg to differ from you. I regard the ability of the Germans in rather a higher light than that of being merely acquisitive."

"Regard it in as high a light as you like, Mowbray, you will always find lots of people here in this country to agree with you ; but truth is truth nevertheless. Good heavens ! do you mean to tell me that the Germans are not utterly deficient in inventive and constructive power ? that they are not completely wanting in mechanical ability ?——"

"And yet Gutenberg invented printing," said Kit, warming with his subject. "König improved upon it ; Guericke invented the air-pump ; Winsor was the first that lit London with gas ; and Steinheil invented an electric telegraph. What do you say to that, Mr. Kingairloch ? I don't pretend to agree with you, but facts seem to me to disprove your theory."

"Not a bit of it. Listen to me," said he, savagely. "Gutenberg *did not* invent printing ; at least it is a disputed point ; and as for König's improvements, they all came to maturity in England ; for if by the most extraordinary chance a German hits upon an idea, for the life of him he

doesn't know what to do with it, but is forced to bring it to England, or some other country, to be made practical. And as for Steinheil's electric telegraph, it was only copied from Wheatstone and Morse; and though Winsor *did* hit upon a method of applying gas to street-lighting, it was only after my countryman Murdoch showed him how to carry out the idea that Providence had afflicted him with, for an idea with a German *is* an affliction."

He took a large quaff of brandy and seltzer, and continued, to the amusement of Kit and Lionel—to the latter especially, who loved to draw Kingairloch, and knew that the German was a sure "find"—

"People may talk as much as they like, and critics—be hanged to them!—may educate the public that the Germans are this thing and the other, but really they're jist nothing. I grant you their excellence in music, but that's Jewish not German; so the same with their philosophy, their only great philosopher was Spinoza, and no ethnologist ever doubts the ability of the Hebrew intellect. But the Germans—God bless me!—

what can they do, or what have they done, that certain people in this country should always be quoting them as the great authorities on every conceivable subject? Anything that requires great labour or industry, and which men of higher intellect would deem beneath them, a German *can* do. He can count the number of hairs on the human head, or the sand on the sea-shore, and if you give him time enough, I'll go so far as to say that he may be able to see one side of a question. But in anything that requires a creative or original genius, the Germans are jist nowhere. Why, their own admirers admit it! Madame de Stäel herself says that German literature is destitute of invention. You talk of their poets, Goethe and Schiller. Well, I grant you that their poetry is good, but it is utterly wanting in constructiveness, and if it hadn't been for Shakspeare, I don't believe even that poetry would have existed. And as for painting, architecture, and sculpture, it is a well known fact that those arts have flourished in the exact ratio in which Greek blood is found prevailing in any people in

Europe, and have died out as Teutonic influence——”

“But, Mr. Kingairloch,” said Kit, with difficulty keeping himself from smiling at the expressions of bitter contempt on the speaker’s face, “surely Germany was the cradle-land of Gothic architecture, and as for painting, look at Rubens, Rembrandt——”

“Stop a minute!” broke in Kingairloch, rudely; “no one knows the origin of Gothic architecture. I believe it is but a development of the Roman, but who developed it I don’t know. All I know is, that it wasn’t more developed in Germany than in France or England. As for Rembrandt, he was a Dutchman, and the Dutch are different from the Germans. Rubens—yes, Rubens was a German—but he owes all his fame to having followed the Dutch school of art, and not the German. The German school is simply noted for its power of imitation, and for its rejection of everything that is great or affecting in the object studied. No, no, this laudation of the German, and everything he does, is but a sign of the cant of the present day. A German can compile a grammar,

or a lexicon; he can edit the classics, and he is just the kind of man who loves to spell Socrates with a *k*. He can get together a lot of ill-digested statements, and can go in for any amount of confusing subjective speculation, which he calls metaphysics, and which is about as much like reasoning as their beastly tobacco is like this Cavendish. Bah! the Germans are the quacks and hacks of the kingdom of letters. Show me a man," said Kingairloch, rising, "whose intellect is industry, whose originality is incomprehensible, whose wit is coarseness, whose sentiment is disease, and whose courage is brutality—a man, in short, whose character is a miserable blending of the schoolmaster, the bully, and the brute, and I at once say that man is a German! There, put that in your pipe and smoke it, young man. I'm going to bed; nothing like the Germans to make one sleepy. Good night!" And Kingairloch went out of the room, leaving the young men to chat together, and to refute his prejudices as best they could.

Two days after this depreciatory attack upon the inhabitants of the Fatherland, Kit

bade farewell to the hospitable household at Yllton.

“We shall be up in town at the end of next week,” said the Colonel to his nephew, as he was entering the waggonette that was to drive him to the station; “and I shall then see your father, and introduce him to Lord Salamis. Bye bye; so glad that your visit to us has resulted in what it has.” Kit drove off.

Kit arrived at St. Ethelburga-terrace just as the family were going to luncheon. The Rector had had a very busy morning. Monday mornings as a rule were always very busy with him, and the day that Kit had chosen to return to his father’s house was a Monday. Seated in his library from ten till half-past one, the Canon had to listen to complaints, to give advice, to offer assistance, till his frame and his patience were both well nigh exhausted. It was no light matter these Monday mornings after a hard Sunday’s duty. First there was the Superintendent of the Women’s Mission, who had to have her long string of complicated accounts examined by the Canon, who hated arithmetic. Then,

no sooner was that estimable but somewhat loquacious lady dispatched, than in came the Churchwardens with their customary complaints about the hot-water pipes, or the gas, or the windows, or a falling off of the offertory. To them succeeded the organist, who, of course, found something wrong with the pedals, or had to report against the pattern Sunday scholar who preferred eating oranges to attending to the "blowing." Then there were the Scripture readers, with their visiting books for the Rector's examination, and their lists of "cases" demanding instant attention, and reports about certain disreputable families lately come into the parish—for though the magnificent squares and terraces of St. Winifrid are inhabited by lords and squires of high degree, and the leaders of the plutocratic world, yet the parish has its full share of numerous slums and alleys, rents and courts, within a stone's throw of its aristocratic haunts. Then the Inspectors of Nuisances had to be written to about open drains and neglected tenements, and collections of garbage, and the like. Mr. Croaker, too, the schoolmaster, generally

chose Monday morning to make his report about the school, and the chances of success in the coming inspection, and this morning that certificated scholar had chosen to take a desponding view of matters. So what with listening to choir squabbles, examining the nurse's lists and bills for the sick kitchen, being attentive to the district visitors, who all had different suggestions upon the administration of relief, and writing letters to the Board of Guardians, &c. &c., the Canon, like most London parsons, found Monday morning generally rather too much for him.

The unexpected arrival of his son (for Kit had given no hint of his return) soon put him, however, in good humour; and before lunch was over the whole family were acquainted with all the particulars relating to Lord Salamis, Violet's accident and rescue (this mildly related), the Board of Conventions, and the University at Riesenheim. The Rector and his family were, of course, enchanted at Kit's prospects, the very thing they had so desired, though they kept all their congratulations in the background till

fully assured, by a rigid examination of my hero's scalp, that he had received no harm, and then, satisfied that beyond a slight bump all was well, they began to make up for lost time by the most profuse praises and rosy prophecies.

"My dear Kit, you really are entering upon life under the most happy auspices! The Board of Conventions—such a very good office! And then seconded by the powerful interest of Lord Salamis! Oh, you may become anything," cried Mrs. Mowbray.

"Oh yes, Kit," cried his eldest sister. "I fancy I see your portrait in the Royal Academy, your manly figure erect upon a Turkey carpet, your dress *dégagé* as if you had neither time nor inclination to attend to such trifling conventionalities as the fit of your coat, the buttoning of your waistcoat, or the folds of your necktie; your splendid head thrown back; hair like that of a literary man, brow thoughtful, eyes gazing sternly at vacancy, firm simper about the mouth; your hand placed for effect upon a large red box with the royal

arms outside, and an important treaty peeping out, &c. And then everybody, struck by your appearance, refers to the catalogue, and reads out, 'No. 94. Portrait of the Right Hon. Christopher Mowbray, M.P., Lord President of Foreign Conventions.' Ah, and you would make a very good picture too, Kit," said Rosa, kissing him affectionately, "for you are a dear, brave fellow!"

"And then, Kit," began Georgie, joyously, "it will be so nice for you to come and take us to the House of Commons, and to let us hear your eloquence! Oh how delicious it will be for us to listen to you furiously attacking the Opposition, or standing up for your *friend* the Right Hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, or delivering some biting sarcasms at a few poor hon. members! Wouldn't it be fun, Rosa? I'm sure you could speak quite as well as Uncle William—don't you think Kit could, papa?"

"Well, my dear, if Kit couldn't talk he wouldn't be worthy of being your brother," replied the Canon, smiling. "But, however,

let us not jump too rapidly to conclusions.

We must see whether Kit is going to follow

• Lord Salamis' advice, and work."

"*Work!*" cried both the girls at once, in contempt; "there is no need for Kit to work, he is a genius. All he has to do is to seize the first opportunity offered him, and then to show Lord Salamis, the Treaty Office, and the country generally his brilliant qualities, and there before him awaiting his acceptance, will be orders, stars, power—everything, in fact. As if a genius ever did such a vulgar thing as work!"

"I vow if you girls don't stop chaffing, that I'll never take you out shopping again," cried Kit.

"Then, seriously," asked Rosa, "what is the Board of Conventions? or rather what will you call yourself?"

"I believe my exact title will be Examiner of Her Majesty's Foreign Conventions."

"And will you wear a uniform like Mr. Owen, the Vice-President of the Tin Taxes, when you go to Court?" asked Georgie.

“What salary do you begin on?” asked the practical mother.

“Did Lord Salamis tell you what would be the nature of your duties?” asked his father.

And then question after question followed in rapid succession, till Kit had completely exhausted his stock of information about the Board of Conventions.

One of the first things that Kit did on his return to London was to call upon Scrope at the Board of Conventions. He found that gentleman at the office, and about to sit down to luncheon.

“Oh, Mowbray, I am so very glad to see you!” said he, rising. “Is it true that you are coming into the office? Sit down.” And he offered his visitor a chair, which he had just freed of its burden of Blue Books.

A few words about Basil Scrope. There are some men we not unfrequently meet, who, by the delicacy of their thoughts, the refinement of their character, and the tenderness of their disposition, strike us more like women than as belonging to the sterner sex. As one became intimate with Scrope it was

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impossible not to feel how greatly Nature had erred at his birth. There was no lack of courage or of strength of character about him, but in all his attributes the feminine element seemed to be predominant. As you looked upon his fair alabaster complexion, the silky chestnut hair, the large dreamy hazel eyes, the delicate aquiline nose, the small mouth and soft rounded chin, you thought how womanly and tender was the face. He had neither beard, whisker, nor moustache, and the absence of these masculine ornaments did not therefore tend to remove the effeminacy of his expression. Then the figure was elegant and fragile, and wanting the outward signs of power in every limb; the head was small and well shaped; the face a gentle oval, and the hands and feet smaller and more beautiful than those of many an Englishwoman. His voice, too, was sweet and musical, and its tones low and well modulated, but you felt that it had no business in the throat of a man, and its dulcet accents sometimes riled you. As was his *physique*, so was his *morale*. He cared little for sport and the exercise it

engenders, for the fatigue soon tired him, though, when any good result was to be obtained from labour, he would toil on till he dropped. But he delighted in every phase of Art, could paint with something of the genius of a true artist, was an excellent musician, and had composed several pieces, noted more for their sweetness than for their strength, and consequently great favourites in the drawing-room. Men felt such an absence of anything like coarseness about him, that in his society they instinctively assumed in their manners and conversation something of the guarded and "put on" tone they adopt when talking to women.

Not a little of this feeling was perhaps due to the severe piety which characterized Scrope. At Oxford the refined monasticism of his life had caused him to be called "the Saint," and the name was not inappropriate. His love of religion and the duties it enforces, made one regret that he had not taken Holy Orders, and why he had not so taken them surprised all, for if ever man was a theologian *manqué*, it was

Scrope. Heart and soul the strictest of High Churchmen, his passion for the æsthetic attached him to the extreme Ritualists. In the little ornate Temple where he worshipped, his slight figure was never missed kneeling by the altar-rails at early Celebrations. Everything that Ritualism enjoins he obeyed. He was sacristan of his Temple, often read the lessons for the day, at processions always carried the huge brass cross, and belonged to several guilds, whose chief object was the visiting of the poor. It so happened that Stangate was the mission field allotted to him by his guild, and being acquainted with Barillon, he was thus led to unite with him in his labours. "He is an excellent fellow," said Barillon, "but there's a great deal too much of 'the Church' about him for my taste."

The love of contrast is great with all of us, and men of opposite tastes and dispositions become often the best of friends. To Scrope, delicate and sensitive as a Keats, the manly, vigorous Mowbray, with his jovial spirits and powerful constitution, was full of charm; whilst Kit gradually began

to like Scrope, for no other reason than that he was so different to himself and to the generality of men he knew. Being in Scrope's society had something of the same effect as being in harbour after a roughish sea—it was so calm, so tranquil, so soothing, and slightly soporific.

But to Kit, who was about to become a member of the Board of Conventions, no friend could have been more desirable. Scrope had been twice private secretary to two successive Lord Presidents, and knew the working of the department to the minutest detail. In the regions of Whitehall he was regarded as a rising man, and had it not been for the expediency of political warfare, by which a Mr. Bateman stepped over his head, he would be now occupying a prominent position in the office.

I need not enter into the details of the conversation that ensued on Kit's visit. Scrope gave his friend full particulars about the office and the work it performed; told him that the Board was so intimately connected with the different Embassies as to have numerous appointments abroad in its

gift, and that if a man worked, and especially if he was helped on by interest, he was sure of a career that nine out of every ten would envy.

"You cannot do better than follow the advice of Lord Salamis," said he, at the end of the visit, and after escorting Kit over the building. "Work at German as diligently as you can—the examination is, after all, but a very mild affair—and get into office as soon as possible. You see a change of Government would be a sad disappointment to you, and there are signs of reaction coming on. Do you want to see Lord Salamis? He's here. I'll ask Upton, his private secretary, if he is disengaged."

"No, thanks; I'll wait till I hear from Germany, and then come and say good-bye to him. Is Barillon in town?"

"No, he went last Tuesday to Belgium. I suppose you'll be too busy to trouble yourself about Stangate now? Prefer to wait till Miss Barillon returns, eh?"

"None of your chaff! I'm devoting all my spare time to coaching German, so I think my visits to that charming place will

have to be discontinued for the present. Well, I'm awfully obliged to you, Scrope, for all your information. Ta! ta!"

"Good-bye; you'll look me up before you go abroad?"

"Friend of my youth and counsellor of my riper years, can you doubt it?" laughed Kit. "Of course I will. Adieu!"

A few words will record the events that intervened previous to Kit's departure for Germany. A week after Lionel Mowbray's letter had been despatched to Dr. Stüttmacher a reply was received, stating that the Professor was willing to accept Kit as one of his special pupils. A brief correspondence then followed between the Canon and the learned Doctor, and it was agreed that Kit should proceed to Riesenheim at the end of the month. Colonel Mowbray called upon Lord Salamis at his office, just as that distinguished statesman had been receiving a deputation with urbanity and dismissing it with platitudes, and introduced the Canon. Both were charmed at making each other's acquaintance, and the tears stood in the eyes of the worthy Rector of

St. Winifrid's when he heard of the high manner in which Lord Salamis spoke of Kit.

"I can assure you, Canon Mowbray," said the Peer at the close of their interview, "I take a sincere interest in your son, and I have no doubt he will so act in his future department as to let me feel justified in advancing his interests. We live in an age when favouritism can still do a little, but it can do nothing without ability or exertion on the part of the recipient—of that your son is well aware, and I am sure he intends to be a worker——"

"Oh! I am sure of that!" echoed the Canon, always ready to sound his son's praises.

"Then you need have no anxiety about his future," smiled Lord Salamis. "Good morning!" And the two parted.

Kit also had a brief interview with the statesman, and received his best wishes for a rapid progress in his new studies. The last thing the young man did before his departure, was to go down to Stangate with Scrope and give a lecture on "Tennyson"

to its pauper inhabitants. It was listened to with the deepest interest.

“Well, my boy,” said the Canon to his son as the latter entered his father’s library to take leave before starting for the Continent, “we shall miss you very much—too much for the happiness of us all! But,” added he, rising from his chair and placing a hand on each of Kit’s stalwart shoulders, “what a consolation it is to your mother and me that we can part from you without those fears which must haunt many a father in these days when sending his son to breathe for a time the tainted atmosphere of Continental life! Thank God, who has so mercifully protected you from the evil, you have never caused us a moment’s anxiety wherever honour was concerned. But, my lad, there are other snares, that I have often mentioned to you since this visit to Germany has been on the *tapis*, equally insidious to our spiritual welfare. I have had, as you know, Kit, some doubts about your going to Germany—to that country where, above all others, a gross materialism is labouring with the keenest intellectual subtlety to

undermine the solemn truths of a revealed religion, and to negative the sweet ethics of Christianity. I have feared, and you know I have frankly owned it to you, that surrounded, as you no doubt will be, by feverish scepticism, your faith might be tempted to waver, and in the hallucinations of intellectual conceit Rationalism might get hold of you to sift you as wheat."

The Canon, ever since he had found that it was necessary for Kit to go to Germany, had been worrying himself about the probability of his son's contracting Rationalistic tendencies.

"But, my dear father," replied Kit, earnestly, "how often have I told you that you distress yourself unnecessarily about this subject. I can assure you that I have never had any inclination to dogmatize upon religious subjects. At Oxford there was a good deal of that kind of thing going on among a lot of young fellows, who thought it evidence of a high intellectual calibre to sneer at faith and to test revelation in the crucible of what they called reason, but, thank God, I never had any temptation that way. On

the contrary, I could scarcely keep my contempt from rising when listening to such critics."

"I am most truly glad to hear it, Kit, and had you but remained in England I should have had as few fears about you in this respect as I have had in the past. But Germany — however, I have made inquiries about Riesenheim and Dr. Stüttmacher, and, to my intense relief, I find that Rationalism finds there a colder home than in other parts of the Fatherland. But still, be on your guard, my lad. Modern religious inquiry is purely destructive; it destroys, but it cannot build; it bids you quit your hold, but it substitutes nothing in its stead. Beware of any system, whether religious or political, that is purely negative and is nothing positive. And let your one shield be intercommunion with your God by the great channel He has created—prayer."

And then, resting his hands on his son's head, he blessed him as Jacob might have blessed Benjamin.



CHAPTER XI.

A GERMAN PROFESSOR.

RIESENHEIM! A small quaint town, with gable-roofed houses, a few ill-paved streets, and a miniature park fronting the Grand Ducal Palace, situated on the confluence of the river Adle with the Rhine. On its eastern and western sides it is flanked by high vine-clad mountains, studded either with numerous villas or mossy ruins. At the back of the town, intersected by the brawling waters of the Adle, rise the tall dense firs of the Shrecken forest, supervised by the neighbouring jägers.

I need hardly say, in these days of competitive examinations, that Riesenheim is the capital of the Grand Duchy of Seltzer-Brunnenstadt, and one of the most important

towns in South Germany. In a commercial and industrial point of view, with the exception of its excellent wines, there is not much doing. Indeed, when we state that the town produces children's toys, wooden clocks, horn cups, and the Brunnen beer, there is nothing more to add. The people, however, under the mild sway of their portly Sovereign, are very happy, and, according to the desires of simple people, prosperous.

Perhaps what tends more than anything else to their prosperity is the high repute the town enjoys as a most important sanitary stronghold for the nervous and dyspeptic. The Riesenheim baths and waters are celebrated wherever indigestion and hypochondria are rife. During the long season, from May to September, the little town is alive with tourists, invalids, and families of all nations, who either wish to take the baths and waters, or else to enjoy the æsthetic advantages of mountain, wood, and river, which Riesenheim so richly offers. So highly is the Brunnenstadt capital appreciated, that the surround-

ing villas seldom fail to find tenants among plutocratic or aristocratic Prussians, Bavarians, Americans, and English, who wish to combine change of air with charms of scenery.

Though the country around is beautiful, the town, like most of the smaller German capitals, possesses few special objects of attraction. The streets are miserable, the buildings unimportant, the shops small and meagre, and there is such an utter absence throughout of all modern improvements as to suggest that Inspectors of Nuisances and Commissioners of Sewers are still officials unknown to the Duchy. But these disadvantages are seldom observed by the visitors, for the town is only occupied by the tradespeople, the students, a few professional folk, and the civic authorities. All who pretend to wealth or fashion inhabit the villas on the hills, or the various hotels that front the Rhine at its confluence with the Adle. The latter is, however, the favourite place of resort, for here are situated the beautiful Thermal temple, with its ever-bubbling springs, the Assembly-

rooms, and the Promenade. Here, too, are a few large houses, inhabited by Court officials, and in one of them, as Rector of the University and Librarian of the Grand Duke, lives Dr. Stüttmächer.

With your permission, we will enter through the Professor's garden, which runs down to the Rhine, and have a look at the abode of the great and eccentric scholar.

It is a large, square, white house, detached, and surrounded by about half an acre of ground. The garden is well laid out, and at its eastern end, where the ground runs level, is an American bowling-alley and skittle-ground. Two young men are now amusing themselves at the game, and the coloured ribbons round their shoulders, with the little white muffin-caps trimmed with gold on their heads, proclaim them to be students. They are smoking long Dresden pipes, and occasionally relieve the dryness of their throats by quaffing Brunnen beer, which stands in horn tankards on the little white table close to the players.

"I say, Reinecker," said a tall, thin Englishman, named Lambert, "I believe

that new fellow is coming to-day: old Stüttmacher has gone to the station to meet him. I wonder what kind of fellow he'll be! *Donner und Blitz*, but that's a good shot!"

"Is he to be a student, this new fellow?" asked the young man addressed as Reinecker, in English, but with a strong German accent; "or goes he only with the Professor here to study?"

"Oh, he's not going to be a student!" replied Lambert; "he's just left Oxford, and is only to grind at German here with 'Milk and Thunder.'"

"Milk and Thunder" was the sobriquet of the Professor at Reisenheim, owing to his combining great savageness on paper with a natural disposition which (like that of many other "scathing critics") was mildness itself.

"Halloa!" added Lambert to his companion, "here is the governor, and with the new fellow, too. *Potstausend*, he seems rather a swell! Hope he wont give himself airs!"

"Oh, your countrymen never do that

when they travel!" laughed Reinecker, sarcastically.

"Well, young gentlemen, still playing—always playing," began the Professor, coming up to them with Kit by his side. "'Amusement,' says your great divine, Jeremy Taylor, Mr. Lambert, 'should be a recreation, not a business;' but you both, it seems to me, make play the only serious occupation of your lives. 'Dulce est desipere in loco,' but, gentlemen, *in loco*—mind that. Mr. Lambert, let me introduce you to a compatriot, Mr. Mowbray, who has come here to study before entering the Government of his country. And very rightly, too! As says your great orator, Burke, Mr. Mowbray, 'that Government deserves only the name which takes care to see that all its officials are fitted by ability and education for the several parts entrusted to them.' And what does your great bard, Shakspeare, say thereon? 'For Government, though high and low and lower put into parts, doth keep in one consent congreeing in a full and natural close like music; therefore doth Heaven divide the

state of men in divers functions,' and therefore you, Mr. Mowbray, have come to us to learn German in order to occupy *your* part in the State. Hem! hem! But be acquainted—Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Lambert—Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Reinecker!"

And whilst Kit is engaged in conversation with his new acquaintances, let me introduce the learned Rector of Riesenheim to you. On the long *rôle* of professional celebrities which add lustre and splendour to the intellectual fame of Germany (*pace* Kingairloch) there stands out no more illustrious name than Paulus Christian Stüttmächer, philosopher and theologian. His "History of Philosophy," "Life of Aristotle," "Lectures on the Apostolical Age," "Commentaries on the Pauline Epistles," "History of the Hebrew Prophets," and "Criticisms on the Penta-teuch," are read wherever German is studied and translated. A mind richly stored with learning and a scholar of European reputation, the Grand Duke did well to appoint him Rector of Riesenheim University, though at first the appointment had been

much criticised. And not without good reason.

Wherever mere erudition was concerned, Dr. Stüttmacher's career, from the very day that he entered the Lutheran Church, had been one of signal success. Critic, philosopher, and theologian, learning had found in him a most worthy and illustrious disciple. But there are men who, not content with following out their special line of thought or action, delude themselves with the belief that they are fitted to shine in other walks than those in which they have won success. We hear of comic actors who believe that tragedy is their *forte*; of sailors, who believe that they ought to have gone into the army; of pulpit orators, who fancy themselves statesmen, and so on. It is but a repetition of the old story, *Qui fit Mæcenæ ut nemo*, &c. Now, in an evil moment Dr. Stüttmacher, after having raised himself to a position which the most ambitious scholar would have been proud to occupy, came to the conclusion that neither philosophy, theology, nor criticism was his *forte*, but politics. Nature had intended him not for

an author, but for a demagogue ! He was to be not merely a man of thought, but also a man of action. Rash and impetuous, with one bound he appeared before the world as a Republican of the reddest dye. In the political addresses, essays, and pamphlets that now poured from his pen, he was no longer the judicious critic, but the hottest, most prejudiced, and most vehement antagonist that German conservatism had ever yet to encounter.

The year 1848 saw him in all his glory. He wrote burning addresses in favour of Kossuth, of Daniel Manin, of the revolt of the Duchies, of English Chartism, of the Cracow Revolution, of the banishment of Louis Philippe, of the Hungarian Rebellion ; and I need hardly say that his pen was in full force advocating the new Prussian Constitution. Indeed, wherever agitation was on the *tapis*—whether in Spain, France, Lombardy, or Italy—there was the German Professor dipping his plume furiously into the ink, and exciting rebels and armies not to cease their endeavours till the battle was won and

victory gained. Twice he had been imprisoned by Prussia, where he was educating youth at one of her favourite Universities, in the calm ethics of philosophy and the Christian precepts of theology; and at last was requested to quit the kingdom. He was now in a sad quandary, for at the same time Austria, Bavaria, and Saxony refused him leave to shelter his democratic person within their realms. Unfortunately, though a martyr to his opinions, it was his fate not to be treated as one; so completely had he made himself ridiculous by his endless denunciations against Monarchy and his eccentric support of all insurrections, that he did the cause he advocated infinitely more harm than good. A scholar and a man of genius, he had lowered himself to be the laughing-stock and political buffoon of Europe. To the future historian of the vagaries of men of genius, the career of Dr. Stüttmacher will afford many interesting details.

At this crisis in the Professor's affairs a well-known English publishing firm asked him to edit, with notes, a new

edition of the Greek Testament. Dr. Stüttmacher accepted the offer and came to England. Here he was received with that courtesy and distinction which we never fail to offer to men of real genius, especially if they be foreigners. A keen observer of men and manners, he now studied the machinery of the English Constitution. He read the works of our constitutional authorities, analysed our domestic habits, saw the peace, quiet, and prosperity of the country, and by the time he had published the first volume of his work, was a converted Radical. Impulsive, like all geniuses, he took at once the world into his confidence, and essays and *brochures* again proceeded from his pen, inculcating, this time, the blessings of constitutional government. But charmed he ever so wisely, no one listened to him gravely. Berlin and Vienna, Munich and Dresden, laughed at his conversion as they had laughed at his Radical diatribes, and refused to remit their sentence of banishment. Those distinguished capitals still feared that, though the Professor's political denunciations were

generally met with scorn and ridicule, yet, under the ægis of an illustrious literary name, he might do harm amongst the lower classes in times of agitation. A man who could one moment write bitter diatribes against all monarchies and aristocracies, and the next veer round and praise what he had before most vehemently abused, was clearly one in whom no reliance could be placed. All things considered, Prussia, Austria, and Saxony thought it better that Dr. Stüttmacher should continue under the ban of their displeasure.

And now it was that the Grand Duke of Seltzer-Brunnenstadt stepped in upon the scene, and proved himself a friend in need. His Serene Highness, who ruled a territory in which it would have been difficult for a subject labouring under *ne exeat regno* to have taken a five mile walk in any direction without infringing the law, had, as most of us have, a hobby, which he was never tired of riding. This hobby was education. The one great object of this illustrious potentate was to make the University of

Riesenheim, founded by his father, the most important seminary on the Continent. So ably had he carried out his idea that his University now began to take high rank amongst its rivals in Germany. Illustrious professors occupied its chairs, its system of education turned out most distinguished pupils, no branch of learning was neglected, and there was much to be found in Riesenheim which was wanting in other kindred institutions. In a few years Seltzer-Brunnenstadt had become important on account of its seat of learning. As Paris is France, so Riesenheim was Seltzer-Brunnenstadt.

Whilst Dr. Stüttmacher was thus shivering in the cold of Teutonic neglect, Dr. Hermann-Strauss, a German of illustrious fame as a critic and compiler, who then occupied the post of Rector of Riesenheim, died. Who was to be his successor? This was the great question that now agitated the Grand Ducal mind. His Serenissimus pondered over the names of illustrious professors in the various kingdoms, states, and

principalities which constitute the Fatherland, but could hit upon no satisfactory choice. At last the royal brow lit up with joy, and like the philosopher, he cried *Eureka! eureka!* In spite of all his political vagaries, he would offer the post to the renowned Dr. Stüttmacher! With the first scholar in Germany at the head of the University, Riesenheim could scarcely fail to be the most famous seat of learning in Europe.

The Grand Duke weighed in the balance the Professor's erratic politics on the one side and his erudition on the other, and found that the erudition easily made the politics kick the beam. The post was offered and accepted. Not a word was said about the Professor's peculiar view of politics, but the new Rector, soon after he was installed, intuitively felt that were he to mix himself up again in political agitations, it would be in the worst taste, and might possibly embroil his royal patron with the higher German powers. He vowed, therefore, that politics should know him no

more, and that for the future he would dedicate his life exclusively to the advancement of learning. He kept his vow, and so well followed out his intention that the University of Riesenheim is now second to none in Germany.

In person Dr. Stüttmächer was a man of some sixty years, with long white hair, which crowned a high, broad forehead, and then flowed over a pair of stooping shoulders. The head, like that of most of the Teutonic race, was brachycephalic—big, round, and broad—the very architecture of acquisitiveness. The eyes were blue and dreamy, the nose somewhat Judaically aquiline, the lips large and full, and the face destitute of beard or whisker. It was a kindly, genial face, and one that had the peculiar charm of lighting up with a very bright, agreeable smile when excited in conversation, or when politely listening. In spite of all his fiery demonstration on paper, the Professor was the mildest and most amiable of men. Perhaps if he had been a shade more stern and strict, his

subordinates would have had less difficulty in preserving order among the three hundred young men who belonged to the University. And yet, often his gentle, rebuking voice worked more effect upon the vicious or the obdurate than would have done severity or tyranny. I doubt whether in the whole of Riesenheim the man had an enemy. His short, stout little figure, always dressed in black, with the large, untidy shirt collars falling over a still more untidy stock, and with the white, venerable hair streaming over his shoulders, was always welcome, whether in the palace, villa, or cottage.

Though he had been repeatedly offered superior posts by other Governments—including the very Governments which had formerly exiled him—he invariably refused the promotion. “Nothing but death would part him from his beloved Riesenheim,” he always said; and certainly no one in the little German Spa wished his absence. In the eyes of Riesenheim the Rector was as much an institution of the place, after his

many years of residence, as the Ducal Palace, the Foundling Hospital, the Trinkhalle, or the Brunnen beer.

Such was the man who was now for the next few months to be Kit Mowbray's master.





CHAPTER XII.

AT RIESENHEIM.

FOR the first few weeks Kit passed the even tenor of his days without much to interrupt the monotony of his life. He was the only English special pupil that the Professor then possessed, and as he was too deficient in German to attend lectures delivered purely in that language, he worked every morning with a tutor. The whole system of instruction pursued at Riesenheim was a source of much interest to him, and at first what leisure he took was occupied in becoming better acquainted with Teutonic University life. The study was not wholly unprofitable.

Unlike our two great English Universities, where the course of education and the different social surroundings appeal (or, perhaps

I should now say, appealed) to the well-born, the wealthy, and the upper strata of the middle classes, German student life is adorned with few high social attributes, and is within the reach of the purse of the poorest father. Numbers of the men (men on the principle that Eton boys are men, for there were many not older than sixteen or seventeen) who attended the lectures at Riesenheim, with the intention of entering the Lutheran Church, or of obtaining some petty Government appointment, had little more than twenty pounds a year *pour tout potage*, to defray College fees, food, lodging, clothes, books,—everything, in fact. Expense is uncalled for, and extravagance out of place, at a German University. There is no necessity for tastefully fitted up college-rooms, for heavy bills, for battels, or for extravagant “wines;” there are no servile tradesmen wishing to have your name on their books, no scouts, no temptations in the way of riding, hunting, driving—none, in fact, of the hundred and one charms and dangers of English University life. In Germany your College is a building to attend lectures in, and to undergo

examinations. It has no "rooms" for the students, no hall for dining, and exercises little or no external control upon the conduct and habits of its *alumni*. Your true German student lives where and how he likes. If his paternal allowance is good, he can take a suite of rooms in an hotel, or in a fashionable street, and be as particular and as fanciful in the selection of his furniture as a retired city man with Gothic tastes. If, on the contrary, the *res angusta domi* will not permit him to be aught but most sparing in his expenditure, he lives in a garret, and on a few kreutzers a day. There is no obligation, if he can control his inclinations, for him to vie with others in extravagant habits; nor does the University require him to "live like a gentleman."

One of the chief results of this social freedom and cheapness of education, is to draw within the fold of the German Universities young men from all classes of society—from the son of the Count about to obtain his commission, to the son of the petty farmer desirous of becoming a jäger. Hence, as in every large and mixed com-

munity, the different members form themselves into cliques, and seldom go outside their own circle to make friendships—such cliques being recognised by certain badges always worn by the students. At Riesenheim the members of the University were divided into the following societies: the *Noble*, composed of young Barons, Counts, and sons of Herr Vons, and of the higher military officers. A few young Englishmen, of good family and fortune, were also permitted as a favour to attach themselves to this corps as honorary members, provided they strictly obeyed the rules required to be observed. The *Noble* students were distinguished from their fellows by wearing a small white cap, trimmed and ornamented with an elaborate monogram on the top, in violet and gold, and a silk ribbon of violet and white round their chests. They were the “gentlemen commoners” of Riesenheim. Then came the *Professional* corps, composed of the sons of professional men, and of students intending to enter the different professions, the more important offices of State, and the various branches of commerce. This

corps wore a red cap, trimmed with black, and a red and black ribbon round the chest. Its members constituted the "commoners" of the University, and, on account of their large number, were split up into numerous sections needless for me to mention. The third corps was the *Armeleute*, composed of all the poor students who had barely sufficient to keep body and soul together, and who, with the general good taste of human nature, which treats poverty everywhere like a crime, were shunned by their fellows like so many pariahs. They wore a black cap, surmounted with a white star, and a black ribbon round the chest. The *Arme* were the sizars and servitors of the University. Added to these three great corps, there were many students who attached themselves to no society, and adopted no peculiar cap; but lived with their families in the town, and concerned themselves but slightly with student customs and amusements.

Between these corps and their different subdivisions a great amount of jealousy existed, and as the fame of Riesenheim was, thanks to Dr. Stüttmächer, very great

throughout the Fatherland, students from the different states and kingdoms constituting Germany enrolled themselves among its pupils, and often caused much jealousy to be mixed up with national patriotism. Frequent were the duels between Saxon and Prussian, Badener and Austrian, Bavarian and Hessian, who found themselves cheek-by-jowl at lectures, or at the beer-drinking Boy-Guilds. Though an appeal to arms was the only recognised mode of wiping out an insult at Riesenheim, duelling chiefly flourished amongst the *Noble* corps. Indeed one section of this corps was composed entirely of duellists, and no one could be admitted to membership without having been "out" twice. The *Professional* corps were the chief supporters of the Boy-Guilds, and preferred drinking beer to shedding blood; but at the same time were as ready to avenge the insulting epithet of fool with their rapiers as any in the *Noble*, only they did not court conflict like the German aristocrats. The *Noble* loved fighting for its own sake, and not merely as a reparation for injury. One young Count would often meet another

young Count at their Guild, or the Lecture-room, or in the Biergarten; and though utter strangers to each other, the conversation would often begin and end thus:—

First Sanguinary Aristocrat. “Have you been here long?”

Second ditto. “No: this is my first term.”

First ditto. “Are you from North or South Germany?”

Second ditto. “I am from Prussia: our property is near Coblentz.”

First ditto. “And I am from Munich: and you are a stupid fool!”

Hostile meeting immediately arranged.

In spite of the coarse and silly amusements of the students—their gross drinking-bouts at their Boy-Guilds, their stupid nursery game of fox-hunting on chairs, their frequent duels, in which brutality struggled with cowardice for the predominance—Kit could not help being struck with the culture and sound sense most of the students displayed. It was no uncommon thing for him to see two young students, unwashed, uncombed, and with the dress and manners of a mechanic, muddling themselves over their horns of beer

in the Biergarten, and yet talking the while in the most intelligent and well-read manner, upon philosophy, philology, history and the like, or else offering sound criticisms on the works of various modern writers of note. Kit, too, was astonished to find how many of the men at Riesenheim were well acquainted with the English language and literature. The works of our great poets, of our leading historians, of our prominent political writers, were all fairly familiar to the better-bred class of these students. Young Mowbray could not help contrasting Oxford with Riesenheim, and thinking how few of his college friends knew anything about Germany, beyond that its people were very dirty, smoked a great deal, drank lager beer, ate sauerkraut, and printed their books on abominable paper. More than once, as Kit became familiar with the manners and customs of the place, he arrived at the conclusion that Riesenheim was as much the intellectual superior of Oxford as the latter was the social superior of Riesenheim.

"You see, my dear young friend," said Dr. Stüttmächer to Kit, who was rapidly be-

coming a great favourite with the Professor, one morning when the conversation turned upon the difference between English and German college life, "with us education is everything—not so much, though, in North Germany as in South Germany; for North Germany is more a barrack than a school, whilst we in South Germany have little of the barrack and much of the school. But in England to be educated you must be rich, whilst in Germany there is a very slender union, as you see, between the brain and the purse. We are more like your Scotch: we give a man an education so that he may fight for himself, and that is all we can do for him. In England you must have some claims to social position to be educated; in Germany you must be educated before attaining your social position. And that," added the Professor, with his usual love of quotation, "is not a difference like that said by your great soul-biting Swift—a 'difference between tweedledum and tweedledee:' eh?"

The only Englishman at Dr. Stüttmächer's besides Kit, was one Andrew Lambert, and Mowbray was to a certain extent necessarily

thrown into his society. Now as we tread our several paths along life's highway, it becomes our lot to meet occasionally pedestrians for whom we have no special liking, but whom we cannot, without offensive rudeness, avoid. To Kit, Lambert was one of these pedestrians. Between the two young Englishmen there was not the slightest bond of sympathy. Their tastes were different, their characters different, their views different—everything, in fact, different. But Kit felt that living under the same roof with Lambert, meeting him often at the Professor's table, and being his fellow-countryman, it would be both disagreeable and in bad taste to show him any slight, especially as Lambert had been guilty of nothing to occasion such coldness. All Kit could say respecting his compatriot, was, "that he disliked the fellow." And though Lambert had entertained friendly feelings towards my hero, and had treated him not unkindly, I must candidly say that the young man was far from being a charming acquaintance.

He was tall and thin, with a high, bald forehead, small grey eyes, a good nose, a large

mouth, full of white teeth, the upper lip scantily covered by a harsh red moustache, a long chin, and a not very honest expression of countenance. Though only a year older than Kit, he was almost bald ; but the few yellow-red hairs that adorned his scalp were carefully brushed straight down, and allowed to grow very long, so that his head looked not unlike a small rock, sparsely covered with seaweed, and lately washed with ocean-brine. By birth he was the son of a large carpet manufacturer, near Dartvennis, in Limeshire, and heir to a considerable business. Shortly after leaving Rugby, he was about to read up for the army, when his eldest brother dying, upon whom the business was to devolve, his father compelled him to take to commerce. At the end of a year spent in the counting-house of the carpet-factory, Mr. Lambert *père*, thought it advisable that his son should acquire German, so as to be able to superintend the foreign correspondence of the office. Accordingly he was sent straightway to Riesenheim, and lodged with its famous Rector.

On Kit's arrival Andrew Lambert had

been just a year and a half under the tuition of the Professor, and was about to return in a few weeks to his native town. Perhaps the best definition of Lambert was, "that he was a bad style of man." Instead of taking his stand upon the merits of his position, his father's high commercial name, the character for honour that the firm enjoyed, and the like, he, with an affectation not wholly uncommon among the sons of the merchantocracy, sneered at his future business, and pretended that such a calling was beneath him. Imbued with the falsest notions, his great aim was to be thought a "swell." He was gorgeous in his attire, lavish in his expenditure, affected in his style of speech, and aimed at being a second Chesterfield in air and manner. Though not particularly good-looking, he always imagined that every member of the fair sex was madly in love with him; and whenever he and Kit found themselves in conversation, the talk was sure to be full of Lambert-brag. Vain, a puppy, though no fool, Andrew Lambert was certainly not an acquisition in the eyes of Kit Mowbray.

It was characteristic, too, of the man, that he never said a good thing of anybody but himself. His peculiar fashion was to begin with faint praise, and end with strong abuse. He, also, with true nineteenth century affectation, attempted to set up for that most unoriginal character, a cynic, and pretended to hold the enviable theory that there was nothing good, nothing true, nothing pure or holy in the world. "It was all," as he loved to express himself, "humbug: the best man was the most cunning humbug, the greatest man was the cleverest humbug, the most successful man was the most successful humbug," and so on. Altogether, he was not a charming character.

Lambert had taken upon himself, shortly after Mowbray's arrival, to force a kind of friendship between the two. He showed Kit Riesenheim and its beauties, explained to him Riesenheim and its customs, criticised Riesenheim and its inhabitants, and all with that praise-abuse he loved to employ. "It is really a niceish place," he summed up, whilst smoking his long Dres-

den pipe in Kit's rooms (apartments furnished with Teutonic simplicity, and possessing a splendid view of the Rhine): "the situation is fairly picturesque, the people rather kindly, and, on the whole, as the Roman Catholic priest here said to the Protestant *pasteur*, when he objected to the idea of purgatory, 'You may go further and fare worse,' only the place is wretchedly drained, and the situation awfully damp; and the scenery—well, who cares for scenery when it gives you the ague? And as for the people, well, they're good enough in their way, but then it's only in their way. To English gentlemen like you and me, my dear fellow, they, with their gimcrack nobility, their boarding-house entertainments and their pothouse manners, are simply cads from head to heel. And then look at the ladies, with their dirty curl-papers, and dirtier hands and gaudy gowns: why, there's not one of them half so lady-like as my sister's maid."

"And yet, if I understand you rightly," said Kit, "these people you sneer at have been very civil to you, and have made you

a frequent guest at their houses? Don't you think it rather bad taste to accept hospitality one moment, and then run down those who have been kind to you the next?"

"Oh, I only do as my neighbours in that respect! If we didn't visit those we abused, our list of acquaintances would be small indeed. Besides, I consider I confer an obligation in dancing attendance on such a low lot as they are here. A man of my stamp isn't caught every day, I can tell you. Shall I tell you what the Baroness Lyteunfriski (you know she is *quite* the queen of fashion here) said of me? Why, she said that few——"

"Oh, pray excuse me!" said Kit, curtly: "I have no doubt it was very flattering, but I must finish these exercises for Otway."

"Oh, by-the-bye," asked Lambert, not a bit offended (men of his disposition have no objection to be snubbed by those whom they admire, and Lambert looked upon Kit with respect), "how do you like Otway?"

"I have never thought about the matter. I see nothing either to like or dislike in him. He seems a man of very delicate health—a shattered constitution, in fact—and I don't

think he is over attentive as a tutor ; but he is good enough for my purpose, I suppose," said Kit, getting up and opening some books.

"Oh, yes," said Lambert, trying to curl his toothbrush-looking moustache : "he is a goodish tutor, and as men go, not a bad sort of fellow, I believe ; only I am sure he is a scoundrel ! And then, how he takes to that awful absinthe ; they say he's drunk every night, and as mad as any two hatters !"

"By *they*," cut in Kit, "I suppose you mean the malicious people who know nothing, and talk about it ?"

"I suppose that's meant for me, Mowbray, eh ? But you are mistaken ; I'm the most good-natured fellow in the world. Only Riesenheim talks about Otway, and wonders why a fellow who has evidently been a gentleman should not go back to his own country instead of being hack to old Stüttmächer and blind drunk every night of his life. But I see I disturb you : *guten morgen* ! I'm off to have a row on the Adle with Reinecker."

Shortly after Lambert's departure a knock at the door was heard, and there entered

the subject of the late unfavourable remarks. He was a man of about thirty, thin, but well made, and looked, as Lambert remarked, as if he had once been a gentleman. His features were good, and his face would have been handsome, save for the sinister look in the light grey eyes, and the deep lines which ill-health had drawn on the forehead and around the eyes and mouth. He was dressed very shabbily and carelessly. No one knew anything about him, except that he was the literary assistant of Dr. Stüttmächer, and spoke German well for an Englishman. Indeed, he had been in Germany for the last four years. In the peculiar complexion of the face, the liquid look of the eyes, and a general nervousness of manner, there were, perhaps, some grounds for the report that he drank. However, whatever scandal might say of him, he was useful to Dr. Stüttmächer, and a passable tutor to young men who, like Kit, were unable to learn German from one who knew nothing of English.

One morning, it was some few weeks

after his arrival at Riesenheim, Kit thought he would take a stroll into the more fashionable quarters of the town, hear the band of the only regiment the Grand Duchy possessed, and see the gay world which was now thronging fast to the pleasant little sanatorium. As he was putting on his wide Panama straw hat, Lambert entered his rooms with that easy familiarity which was his wont, and which was certainly not encouraged by Kit.

“Halloa, Mowbray, what are you about? I thought you made a point of always ‘sapping’ in the morning! Going to take a constitutional?”

“Yes: I’ve been grinding during the last few days, and am a little seedy.”

“You couldn’t have chosen a finer morning, only I don’t like the look of those black clouds in the horizon, and the hills seem so near that I am sure we shall have rain, perhaps a storm. The air is damp, isn’t it? Awful place this for rheumatism, and, by the way, fellows of your constitution often fall a prey to it, now I come to think about it! Where are you going?”

"To hear the band."

"So am I: we'll go together."

In spite of Lambert's meteorological prophecies, the day was charming. The sky was dark blue, unflecked by a cloud; the air soft and balmy; the surrounding scenery bathed in a splendid July sunshine; whilst everything looked as if the Creator was smiling upon the created. As the two young men threaded their way through the tortuous streets, they stopped more than once to watch the gaiety and animation that reigned around. There slowly driving down the Residenz-strasse (the Whitehall of Riesenheim), were antiquated one-horse chariots, like the German Bund, in the last stages of dissolution, carrying large burly men, with green rosettes in their button-holes, to the Parliament House (Brunnenstadt boasts a Parliament, and its members talk so much and do so little that the institution is the only English thing in the place). Pacing along the narrow *trottoirs* were big, unwieldy women in bright-coloured dresses, accompanied by their light-haired daughters, taking their morning promenade or spending

kreutzers in shopping. Through the windows of the gable-roofed houses, Hans and Gretchen were ogling each other; students were swaggering about, smoking pipes as long as their hair, and talking metaphysics as cloudy as their tobacco; blue-uniformed officers, in tunics as limited as their pay, and swords as long as their noble pedigrees, were making the pavement clank with their strides; city men were bustling along the streets and alleys that led to the Bourse, to indulge in speculations more profitable, it is to be hoped, than many of those of their learned professors. At every turn one encountered pedestrians, equestrians, patricians, proletarians: everybody, in fact, in Brunnenstadt who wanted an excuse or was compelled by necessity to be out in such *schönes wetter*. There they were—aristocracy, democracy, plutocracy, bureaucracy, and especially hypocrisy—all making the little capital as animated a picture of outdoor gaiety as it was possible for the town to exhibit.

As the two young men approached the fashionable districts of Riesenheim, the pro-

gress of Lambert was one uninterrupted series of salutations. What with bowing to the ladies and to men of all classes, his student's cap (for Lambert was a student and not, like Kit, a special pupil) was hardly on his head for a minute together.

"You seem to know a lot of people here," said Kit.

"Yes; I think I know almost everybody in the place," replied Lambert. "If you want to relieve the monotony of your studies by social dissipation, I can give you any amount of introductions. The dinners are not bad, and there are balls and receptions every night; only a German's idea of a dinner is coarse plenty with bad waiting, and of a ball, incessant dancing with ill-dressed girls in a stifling atmosphere."

"Oh, thanks, you are very good," answered Kit; "but I think whilst I'm here I shall content myself with coaching up German and getting ready as soon as possible for my exam. Halloa, here we are at the band; what a crush there is!"

It was the custom for the band to play outside a small Gothic building, which was

a kind of Brunnenstadt National Gallery, and during the hour that music was being sweetly discoursed every seat around the building was thronged. Lambert lit his cigar, seized upon the first vacant chair he came across, and put himself into what he thought was an imposing attitude. As for Kit, finding that no seat was to be had, and not being loath to quit Lambert, he strolled into the gallery to examine the pictures. At the end of half an hour, having exhausted the beauties of the collection, he was about to issue on to the promenade, when a sight met his gaze that made him come to a sharp stand-still.

There, not a hundred yards from him, was Lambert, chatting away with his usual volubility to a young lady seated by his side. It needed eyes less keen than those of Kit's not to recognise in that young lady the fair winsome face of Miss Barillon.

And, not ten paces from his pupil, there, too, gazing at her with a wild, hungry look, was James Otway the tutor.

Kit at once went up and introduced himself. "Oh! how do you do, Mr.

Mowbray? Who would ever have thought of meeting you here! Are you taking the waters?" said Miss Barillon, with the brightest of smiles.

"No, I am not here for pleasure," replied Kit, sitting upon a chair near her that happened to be unoccupied. "Thanks to Lord Salamis, whom I met at my uncle's, I have been offered an appointment in his office, and am here to learn German."

"Oh, I'm so glad! Lord Salamis is such a charming man—he's so very kind. Oh, of course, I remember now!" said Miss Barillon, as if a sudden thought had flashed across her brain. "I heard of your gallant act in saving dear little Violet's life. What a pet she is! No wonder, then, that Lord Salamis should be interested in you! Let me congratulate you, both on your bravery and your prospects. Then you and Mr. Scrope will be colleagues? And where are you staying?"

"With Dr. Stüttmächer."

"Oh, then you and Mr. Lambert know each other. I was just going to introduce you," said Miss Barillon, laughing and turning to Lambert.

"Oh yes, I know Mowbray," said Lambert, a little sulkily—he did not seem the best pleased at this renewal of acquaintance. "I never knew that you and he were acquainted, though."

"How should you? Do I tell you who all my friends are? Oh yes, Mr. Mowbray and I knew each other in London. By the way, and how is Stangate getting on?" And she turned towards Kit.

"Very well, I believe. I've had letters from Scrope, saying that matters are progressing most satisfactorily. As your brother wages war against the parochial authorities, Scrope seems to be always in hot water with the Dissenters. The parish of Stangate must think amateur almoners rather a combative class as a rule! And how is your brother? I had a letter from him shortly after his arrival in Belgium, but his correspondence has suddenly ceased."

"Oh, there is a reason for that," smiled Miss Barillon, expressively. "We hear that he is stopping at a château near Spa, and very much attached to the daughter of his host. He is so engrossed with his

lady love, that he has no time to write to anybody."

"That is one way of going to Belgium to report on its prison establishments," laughed Kit.

"Talking of prisons," said Lambert, with an air of great importance, "I dined last night at Prince Adelstein's — he's the Director of the gaols here—and would you believe it, there was no fish!"

"Perhaps they finished it upstairs," said Kit, drily.

"I dislike chaff of this kind, Mowbray," said Lambert, nettled. "It's bad form. Because you know no one here, you needn't be jealous at my having the *entrée* everywhere."

"I am not jealous," replied Kit, quietly.

"Ah, the music is over!" said Miss Barillon. "Now I wish both of you gentlemen to be my escort to the Avenue where the bazaars are. I said I would meet my aunt there—Miss Lysaght, you know—and give my opinion on an amber bracelet she wants to buy."

"I hope Miss Lysaght is better?" said Kit, rising.

"Oh, very much. We have taken a villa close to the Adle for the next two months, as she has been ordered the waters. I hope both of you will come there very often. You must let me see what progress you are making in German, Mr. Mowbray, from time to time. I think I could make a very good tutor."

"I am sure I would wish no other," said Kit.

And then the three walked on to the Avenue, Miss Barillon and Kit pleasantly chatting, whilst Lambert was sulky and reserved.

END OF VOL. I.

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